

THE
Parliamentary Register;
OR,
HISTORY
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSES of LORDS and COMMONS.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

The most interesting SPEECHES and MOTIONS; accurate
Copies of all the PROTESTS, and of the most remarkable
LETTERS and PAPERS; together with the most material
EVIDENCE, PETITIONS, &c. laid before and offered to either
HOUSE,

DURING THE

THIRD SESSION of the EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

VOL. VII.

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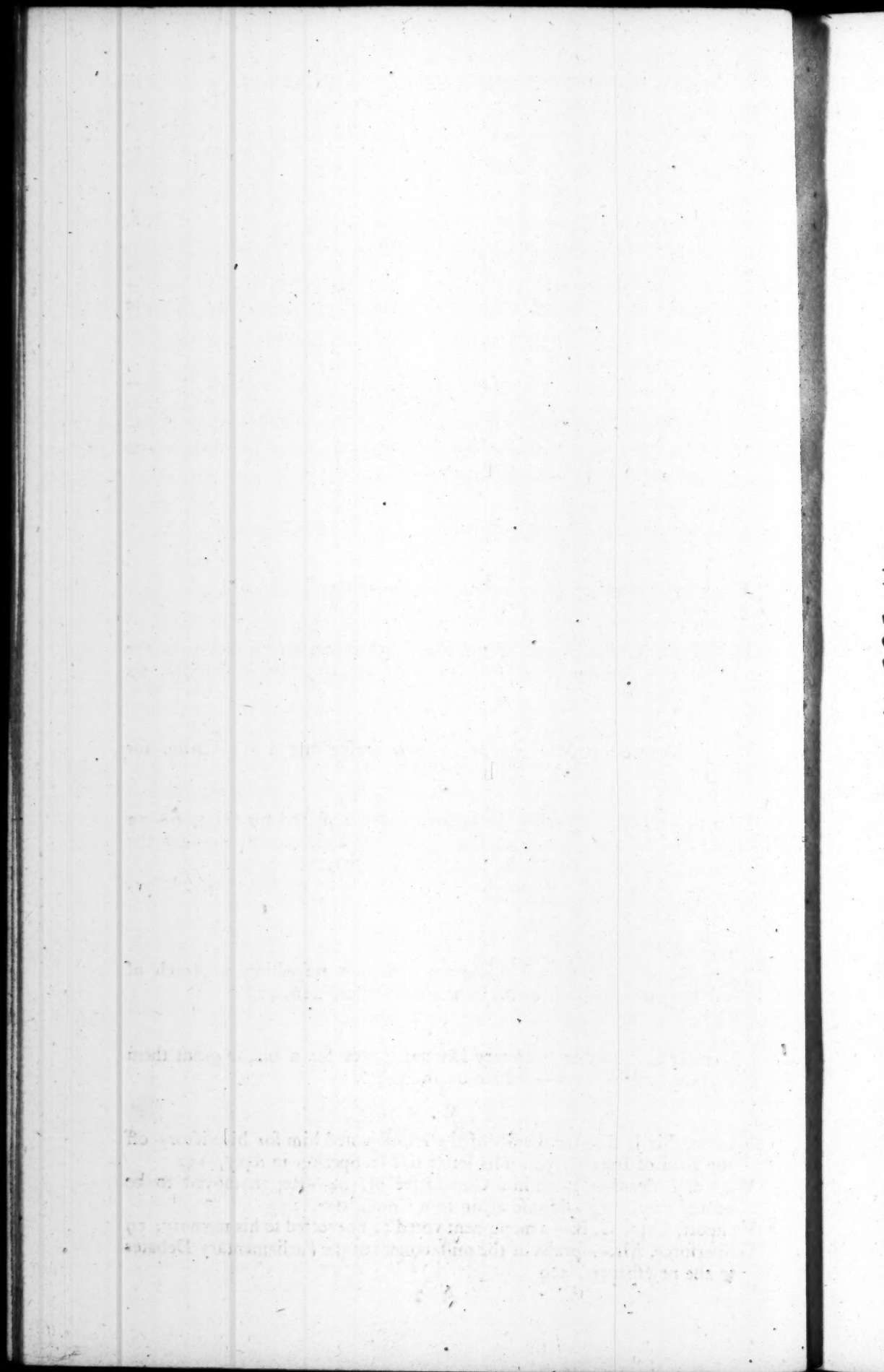
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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSES OF LORDS AND COMMONS,

In the THIRD SESSION of the
Eighteenth Parliament of GREAT BRITAIN,

Appointed to be holden at WESTMINSTER,

On TUESDAY the 27th of SEPTEMBER, 1796.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, November 20, 1798.

HIS Majesty, being seated on the Throne, adorned with His Crown and Regal Ornaments, and attended by his officers of State (the Lords being in their robes), commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to let the Commons know, "It is His Majesty's pleasure they attend him immediately, in this House."

Who being come with their Speaker,

His Majesty was pleased to speak as follows:

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

The events which have taken place in the course of the present year, and the signal success which, by the blessing of Providence, has attended my arms, have been productive of the happiest consequences, and have essentially promoted the prosperity and glory of our country.

The unexampled series of our naval triumphs has received fresh splendor from the memorable and decisive action in which a detachment of my fleet, under the command of Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, attacked and almost totally destroyed a superior force of the enemy, strengthened by every advantage of situation: by this great and brilliant victory, an enterprize of which the injustice, perfidy, and extravagance, had fixed the attention of the world, and which was peculiarly directed against some of the most valuable interests of the British empire, has, in the first instance, been turned to the confusion of its authors; and the blow thus given to the power and influence of France has afforded an opening which, if improved by suitable exertions on the part of other powers, may lead to the general deliverance of Europe.

The wisdom and magnanimity so eminently displayed at this conjuncture by the Emperor of Russia, and the decision and vigor of the Ottoman Porte, have shewn that those powers are impressed with a just sense of the present crisis; and their example, joined to the disposition manifested almost universally in the different countries struggling under the yoke of France, must be a powerful encouragement to other States to adopt that vigorous line of conduct, which experience has proved to be alone consistent with security or honor.

The extent of our preparations at home, and the demonstrations of zeal and spirit among all ranks of my subjects, have deterred the enemy from attempting to execute their vain threat of invading the coasts of this kingdom.

In Ireland the rebellion which they had instigated has been curbed and repressed; the troops which they landed for its support have been compelled to surrender; and the armaments since destined for the same purpose have, by the vigilance and activity of my squadrons, been captured or dispersed. The views and principles of those who, in concert with our inveterate enemy, have long planned the subversion of our Constitution, have been fully detected and exposed, and their treasons made manifest to the world. Those whom they had misled or seduced must now be awakened to their duty; and a just sense of the miseries and horrors which these traitorous designs have produced, must impress on the minds of all my faithful subjects the necessity of continuing to repel with firmness every attack on the laws and established government of their country.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

Under the unavoidable pressure of protracted war, it is a great satisfaction to me to observe, that the produce of the public revenue has proved fully adequate to the increase of our permanent expenditure; that

the national credit has been maintained and improved; and that the commerce and industry of my subjects have continued to increase and flourish in a degree hitherto unknown.

The situation in which we are placed, unhappily renders the continuance of heavy expences indispensable for the public safety. But the state of our resources, and the good sense and public spirit which prevail through every part of my kingdom, will, I trust, enable you to provide the necessary supplies without essential inconvenience to my people, and with as little addition as possible to the permanent burdens of the State. The progress made towards such a system by the measures adopted in the last session, and the aid given to public credit by the plan for the redemption of the land tax, have been attended with the most beneficial effects, which you will, I am persuaded, omit no opportunity to confirm and improve.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

I rely with confidence on the continuance of your exertions to enable me ultimately to conduct the great contest in which we are engaged to a safe and honourable conclusion.

We have surmounted many and great difficulties. Our perseverance in a just cause has been rewarded with distinguished success; and our present situation, compared with that of other countries, sufficiently prove how much, in a period of general danger and calamity, the security and happiness of the British nation have depended (under the blessing of Providence) on its own constancy, its energy, and its virtue.

His Majesty and the House of Commons then retired; and after the speech had been read by the Lord Chancellor on the woolsack, and the Clerk at the table,

Lord CLIFTON (Earl of Darnley in Ireland) rose, and spoke as follows:—My Lords, the difficulty of doing justice to the extraordinary and brilliant circumstances of the present moment, added to the conviction that I have no claim to that indulgence which you have always shewn to those who, on former occasions of a similar nature, have spoken in this place for the first time, would almost induce me to repent of the task I had imposed on myself in the moment of its execution; and I should rise with peculiar diffidence and embarrassment if I was not well assured that every word that can be uttered, however weak and inadequate,—every sentiment that can be expressed, however deficient in energy and

force,—must necessarily accord with the feelings of every man who hears me, and who rejoices with his Sovereign in announcing the glories of this auspicious day—For who is there among any description of His Majesty's subjects who does not feel that this is indeed a proud day for his country? Who is there who does not exult in the conviction that no Monarch who ever sat on that Throne has ever had such an opportunity of giving and receiving congratulations from his faithful people, faithful to him and to themselves, emerging with splendour from those difficulties with which they have been so long surrounded, and reaping the fruits of their steady perseverance in a just and righteous cause? Who is there, I say, who does not feel his own personal pride gratified in the triumphs of His Majesty's arms with which the remotest shores of the world resound, proclaiming their own deliverance and protection, and hailing the matchless prowess of the British navy? Under these impressions, and certain, at least, that my subject will be grateful to my hearers, I shall proceed with much satisfaction to a consideration of the different topics of His Majesty's speech, on which the address I shall have the honour to move will be founded: and although on former occasions it may sometimes have been objected, with reason, that the address has been too much the echo of the speech, on this I am persuaded I shall most effectually ensure your unanimous approbation and concurrence by adhering as closely as possible both to the letter and the spirit of His Majesty's gracious communication. On such a theme, it may almost be said that words can never be wanted to express the feelings which it naturally inspires, and that "*Dicendi causa talis oblata est, in qua oratio nemini deesse potest.*"

I do not feel it necessary in this place to dwell long on the general subject contained in the opening of the speech; persuaded, as I am, that every man must agree cordially with His Majesty, that the successes of his arms have been great and glorious, and have materially conducted to the honour and prosperity of our country: and I shall pass on rapidly to that great event which demands our first and warmest congratulations, in which I am sure the hearts of every one of your Lordships have anticipated me,—the splendid and important victory obtained by the fleet under the command of Lord Nelson at the mouth of the Nile. This event is so transcendent in its nature, so eminently brilliant and decisive in its execution, and so important in its consequences, that much as it has already been celebrated by the united voice of the British empire, and of the whole world itself, I feel it is a topic that can never satiate or disquiet; and that on this first public opportunity of descanting on

its merits, I should do as little justice to the feelings of the House as to my own, if I should forbear to bestow on it my full, though inadequate tribute of admiration and applause. The other naval triumphs which have distinguished the annals of the present war, unrivaled as they have been in the history of this or any other nation, are yet in some points peculiar to this great achievement, eclipsed by its superior lustre, while, in another point of view, it may be said to have added additional splendor to them, by filling up the little that was wanting to complete the measure of our naval fame. For in this instance, at least, no superiority of seamanship or manœuvring on our part, no want of every possible advantage of force and preparation against attack, on the part of the enemy, can be alledged by them as a palliation of the most complete and signal overthrow that any description of force has ever received by sea or land. It has proved beyond the possibility of dispute, that to such officers and to such men, actuated by no motive but that of their own and their country's glory, combining the most consummate skill with the most matchless intrepidity, the steady coolness of the most prudent caution with the apparent temerity of the most romantic enterprize, the rigid restraints of discipline with perfect confidence in chiefs whom they adored, and led to battle by a man whose name will be recorded among the greatest commanders that the world has ever produced, nothing is impossible; and that such qualities as these united in a British fleet are *absolutely irresistible*. In short, my Lords, (lest I should be led away by so copious and pleasing a subject, on the one hand, to trespass too long on your patience, and, on the other, appear to hazard the vain attempt of illustrating by the pomp of words an achievement to which no words can do adequate justice,) I shall sum up every thing that can be said on the subject in an assertion which I make with confidence—that the exploits performed by the British fleet on the first of last August, is unparalleled in the history of any age or country. For on what occasion have so many different glories distinguished any one action by sea or land? When has such dauntless intrepidity appeared in any attack, such steady valour in any contest? When has the destruction of the enemy, of whatever description, been so total and so complete? When have courage, conduct, piety, and modesty been so strikingly displayed in the leader; subordination, unanimity, and intrepidity, in those he led to glory? When, finally, have so many important consequences resulted from any one event? This last consideration would naturally lead me to another part of my subject, if I could dismiss the glorious topic of the British navy, without calling your Lordships' attention to other victories

which have been gained by His Majesty's fleets since last we met in this place, and which, though lost in some degree in the superior resplendency of the memorable first of August, are yet highly important in themselves, and honourable to those who shared in them. For no one who considers the alarming and dangerous state in which Ireland has so lately been, or the difficult and delicate circumstances of its present situation, will fail to estimate very highly the services rendered by Sir J. B. Warren, and the other officers and men who contributed to the destruction of the second armament destined for that country; though, doubtless, if it had effected a landing, it would have experienced the fate of the first. But, my Lords, it would be both invidious and unjust to select particular objects of praise among our gallant officers and men, who have been enabled to render essential services to their country, by having met with enemies to encounter, and victories to gain; assured as we must be, that there are few, if any, among this valuable description of men, who would not, under similar circumstances, have contributed equally to their own and their country's glory. I should wish, if possible, in addressing your Lordships, to avoid any thing like a parade of words, or attempt at declamation; but who can avoid a degree of warmth and enthusiasm on the subject of our invincible navy—the bulwark of our empire, the safeguard of our commerce, the ever-watchful guardian of our free and happy shores—the protection of our allies, the terror of our enemies, and the admiration of the world—Manned by seamen, whom no difficulties can discourage, no dangers can appal; and conducted by officers whose lowest merit is skilful intrepidity in the hour of danger, but who, in their active and laborious professions, endure a painful and unceasing anxiety and exertions of mind and body, which no gratitude of their country, no remuneration which she can bestow, can ever sufficiently repay?

Your Lordships will forgive me, I am convinced, if in celebrating this pre-eminently triumphant period of their well-earned glories, I am tempted to give way to my feelings beyond the precise limits of my subject, and to express a hope that the time is not far distant, when those men, to whom their country owes so much, will never be reduced to a situation of penury and want, when their services are no longer called for. In introducing this subject, I have, perhaps, been irregular, and shall forbear to press it: but your Lordships will readily agree with me, that no man can support the character and appearance of a gentleman on the half pay of a Lieutenant: and I am convinced the people of this country, great as they may feel the weight of their burdens, would

most gladly and chearfully contribute to make the situation of those men comfortable to whom they know they are indebted in a great measure for the many blessings they enjoy, and perhaps for the very political existence of their country.

I come now to consider the consequences which have resulted from the late glorious successes, and especially from the victory of the first of August, the immediate effects of which have been great indeed: and we may reasonably expect that the remote ones will be still more important. The insane and atrocious enterprize of our enemies has received such a check as neither the abilities of Buonaparte, or the enthusiasm and desperation of his army will easily overcome. Cut off from all supplies by sea, and in a country justly irritated by every feeling of indignation and resentment that can actuate the mind of man, exposed to the continental attacks of an active and desultory enemy, and surrounded by difficulties of every description to impede his farther progress, we may fairly presume he can never succeed in his avowed object of injuring us in our valuable Eastern possessions. But, my Lords, allow me farther to observe, as I think I may without presumption, that the just vengeance of Heaven, so long suspended, appears at last to have overtaken these destroyers of the human race; and that the gigantic crimes of a whole nation, as well as those of each individual, will sooner or later meet with just retribution. A great and terrible voice appears at last to have proclaimed to them that the sacrilegious profanation of every divine, and the unprincipled contempt of every human law, however they may prosper for a time, ensure in the end the punishment they deserve. Yes, my Lords, the curses, "deep, not loud" of those who live under the rod of the directorial power, the groans of Switzerland, the tears of so many widows and orphans, have not been heard in vain—Already the torpid spirit of Europe begins to revive. We have taught them that the Great Nation is not invincible; and that by resistance to its power the world may yet be saved. Already the Emperor of Russia begins to wield the mighty force of his immense territory, and joined with his former enemies by a common sense of danger and just indignation, is preparing to avenge their unprovoked and unprincipled aggression; while the Ottoman Porte, the old and firm ally of France, is justly and suddenly become her most implacable enemy, and has, by herself, been forced to unite with its former foes to punish her perfidy and ingratitude. Already the King of Naples, under the protection of the British arms, refuses to submit any longer to degradation and insult, and ventures to set the oppressors of Italy at defiance; while the inferior States appear

to gain courage by his illustrious example, and their confidence in the same support.

Let us also hope, at least, that the favourable symptoms which have manifested themselves in other quarters, will lead, at least, to a resumption of that energy and spirit which alone can save the whole system of Europe, and of civil society itself, from the unrelenting grasp of that monster, which has so long been suffered with impunity to devour every thing around it; while those who are alone able to obstruct its progress, have, by their forbearance, encouraged it to proceed with rapid strides towards their own destruction. But the mist is at last dispelled by our persevering exertions, and by the triumphs of the British arms. Those unfortunate countries themselves, which have so long kissed the iron rod of despotism, under which they groaned, begin to struggle for their deliverance, and loudly to invite the return of order, government, religion, and laws, of which, in the name of Liberty and Equality, they have been so violently dispossessed. While we shudder with horror on account of the renewed scenes of slaughter, which must be the consequence of such a state of things, let us hope, at least, that it will tend, together with our own exertions, to a restoration of that order and that security, for which we have so long and so strenuously contended: and that the torrents of blood which have been shed, in resisting the common oppressors of mankind, will not have flowed in vain.

From our own experience in this country, we have seen what may be effected by braving, instead of yielding to, the storm: for when our Minister was obliged to return from Lisle, after having exhausted every means of concession short of humiliation, and it became evident to all the world that our enemies seriously entertained the vain hope of reducing us to the miserable state into which so many of the nations of Europe had fallen—when they openly manifested their intention of pouring their veteran and victorious legions on the British shores, their vain menaces only served to rouse the dormant spirit of the nation, and all ranks of men flocked by thousands to the standard of their country. Awed and astonished by the sudden appearance of a great nation in arms, and ready to defend every thing justly dear to them, at the hazard of their lives, they wisely desisted from their purpose, and thought it no disgrace to suffer the proudest menaces, and most insulting boasts of future achievements to evaporate in mere words. They acted wisely, I say, being fully convinced, that whatever force had effected a landing, would have met inevitable destruction, and have proved that this country is as little to be conquered by force of arms, as it is to

be awed and terrified by the vain threats and pompous denunciations of impotent vengeance.

Despairing of success in this country, they turned their thoughts to other quarters; and while the main body of the army of England under the conduct of Buonaparte himself, so well support their pretensions to the title they have assumed by an attack on the defenceless Egyptians, detachments are sent to Ireland, which country they had unfortunately too well prepared for their reception, by those arts which they have so successfully practised in other parts of the world. But here even, where their prospects of success appeared most fair, they have been completely baffled, and their forces captured, dispersed, or destroyed. The unnatural rebellion raised and fomented by them, in conjunction with those traitors who have been detected and punished, has been, in a great measure, suppressed, though its baneful effects still continue to disgrace the Irish name, and hold out to the world, in hideous colours, the consequences of that terrible union of French principles and ignorant bigotry, which has taken place among that deluded people. The machinations of our domestic enemies, in conjunction with a foreign foe, have, however, been happily frustrated, and so completely laid open to the world, that the most incredulous can no longer doubt their existence; and all who set any value on the blessings of good order and government, must join with your Lordships in expressing their detestation and abhorrence of them. The misfortunes of Ireland have also had the good effect of displaying, in striking colours, the zeal and spirit of the well affected, and especially of that useful body of men, the armed Yeomanry, to whose unremitting exertions, in the hour of danger, I was myself a witness, and believe the country owes to them, in a great measure, its safety and preservation.

There is another part of His Majesty's speech, which, though not immediately addressed to this House, forms too interesting a topic to be passed over in silence, and is too flattering to the feelings of Englishmen not to be added as a distinguished feature in the pleasing picture of our present situation, which I am happily enabled to draw. At the end of the sixth year of this arduous contest, of a war unprecedented in point of exertion and expence, His Majesty has an opportunity of congratulating us on the flourishing state of the revenue, of the national credit, and of the commerce and industry of his subjects. The public funds have not only resisted the increased pressure which every day of protracted warfare must necessarily bring, but have even risen in a manner which must astonish all those who ever doubted of the extent and variety of the

resources of this country. At what period of history, indeed, has the commerce of any country been so great, so extended, so universal, or in so eminent a degree, commanded the monopoly of the trade of the world?—and as if to prove by a fresh and striking instance that—*This even-handed justice commends th' ingredients of our poison'd chalice to our lips.*—In the case of our inveterate and unprincipled enemies, by their very attempt to injure us in our valuable Eastern possessions, they have annihilated the small remains of their almost extinguished commerce, and restored to us, together with the undisputed command of the Mediterranean, the lucrative trade of Turkey and the Levant—When in the midst of profound peace have such great and valuable fleets ever reached our ports in safety? At what period has a vast and productive capital ever been employed with so much judgement and advantage in agriculture, and in every species of internal improvements, of which a country is capable? When in the history of civilized society, has the astonishing spectacle appeared, of a whole nation in arms, bidding defiance to a powerful, daring and implacable enemy, and at the same time exercising all the arts of peace more successfully than any other country has been able to do, amidst the most profound tranquillity and security? The system of finance, which was so happily adopted last year, and from which we have experienced such beneficial effects, will, I trust, be steadily pursued. It has served to place, in a striking point of view, our unexhausted riches, resources, and public spirit. The voluntary contributions, and the plan for the redemption of the land tax have succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations; and, together with the other favourable circumstances of our situation which I have detailed, have raised the public funds in a manner unexampled during the period of any former war in which we have been engaged. We have, indeed, my Lords, fair and reasonable ground of hope, that if it should please the great disposer of events to extend that protection to us which we have hitherto so eminently received at his hands, that this nation will rise from the dangers and difficulties with which it has been surrounded, greater and more prosperous than ever.

But, notwithstanding all this, pleasing and satisfactory as it undoubtedly is, let us not for a moment deceive ourselves with the idea that our exertions are at an end, or that we may not still have many more to make, and many difficulties to encounter as great as those we have so happily surmounted. But I am fully persuaded, (I speak it with pride and satisfaction), that His Majesty will not be deceived in the implicit confidence which he is pleased to express in the continuance of our exertions. The sentiments so well

expressed by our beloved Sovereign in the conclusion of his speech, are, I doubt not, engraved on the hearts of every rank and description of his subjects. Yes, my Lords, the people of England are fully sensible of the inestimable blessings they enjoy—they know by what means they have preserved them; and, unawed by difficulties, unappalled by dangers; patiently enduring the necessary weight of their increasing burdens as the lighter evil of the two, when contrasted with the chance of subjugation by a foreign foe, they will (I speak it with confidence, from past experience), unite hand and heart with their King in enabling him “to bring the great contest in which we are engaged to a safe and honourable conclusion.” They see the terrible example of other nations before their eyes, who, basely or unwisely preferring patient submission to manly resistance, have suffered themselves, one by one, to be engulfed and swallowed up in the revolutionary vortex of their restless and powerful neighbours.—On the other hand, they must behold, with pride and satisfaction, the contrast which their own country presents to the astonished and admiring world, by pursuing a different line of conduct, rising greater from every difficulty, preserving herself by her valour and exertions from every danger, and holding out the glorious example of successful resistance to the prostrate and dejected nations of Europe. Encouraged by the past, they look forward with steady confidence to the future: they know, that great as their exertions and sacrifices have been, that still greater may yet be required, and are prepared to make them. Undazzled by the splendid success with which their efforts have been crowned, but firmly relying on their continuance under the favour and protection of that Providence whom they adore as the author of all good, they are determined not to relax their efforts till they have attained the great end for which they have so long and so strenuously contended—security for the blessings they enjoy. They know the full value of peace; they have felt the inconveniences and calamities inseparably connected with a state of warfare; but they know also that peace without security, and dictated by those enemies who have sworn their destruction, would be far more calamitous than any evils which could result from their open enmity and avowed hostility. They have seen the utmost exertions of their power directed against themselves, and have resisted them with glory and success: they have seen the effects of their friendship applied to other countries, and reject the very idea with indignation and horror.—In a word, they are true to their King, to their country, and to themselves. And shall we, my Lords, the first order of men in the country, the support and ornament of the

Throne, placed between the King and the People, as the natural and hereditary guardians of the rights of the one, and the liberties of the other, without invidious or exclusive privileges, possessing a greater share than any other class of our fellow subjects in the blessings and advantages of their happy land:—Shall we, I say, be backward in following our Sovereign in the honourable career which he has this day marked out for us? At a time when it is become the fashion to decry and vilify nobility, and the pride of false philosophy has taught men to despise whatever their forefathers have looked up to, I have some satisfaction in being able to reflect that we have not hitherto been backward in our exertions, that we have neither spared our persons nor our fortunes, or deserted our country in the hour of danger. And I feel a well-grounded confidence, that, under any circumstances which can possibly occur, our King, whom we so justly revere, will find us as little disposed to desert him as I know he would be to desert us. Let us, therefore, emerging as we are from those difficulties which our energy has alone enabled us to surmount, exulting in the well-earned glories of the British name, and the proud and dignified situation in which our country is placed, and looking forwards with hope and confidence to that period when the enjoyment of honourable and permanent tranquillity shall crown our exertions, offer at the foot of the Throne our hearty congratulations and unanimous concurrence in those sentiments which His Majesty has been pleased to express, assuring him, that we not only feel their full force, but are determined to act up to them: and that, at all times, and under all circumstances, in our collective, as well as in our individual capacity, His Majesty may firmly rely on the steady, active, and zealous support and co-operation of the House of Lords.

I shall therefore move, That the following humble Address be presented to His Majesty:

“ We, your Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, beg leave to approach your Majesty with our humble thanks for your Majesty’s most gracious speech from the Throne.

“ We beg leave to offer to your Majesty our heartfelt congratulations on the glorious and decisive victory obtained by your Majesty’s fleet under the command of Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, over an enemy superior in force, and in the advantage of situation;—an achievement which has even added fresh splendor to the unexampled series of your Majesty’s naval triumphs. While this memorable success has, in the first instance, turned out to the confusion of the enemy; an enterprise, not more distinguished by its injustice, perfidy

and extravagance, than by the inveterate hostility of its authors against every British interest, we entertain a just hope that the blow now given to the power and influence of the enemy will be decisive in its effects:—that the opening thus afforded will be improved by other Powers, to the maintenance of their own independence and security; and that the wise and dignified example of the Emperor of Russia and of the Ottoman Porte will be followed by such effectual and united exertions, as are alone suited to the present crisis, and as are best calculated to produce the general deliverance of Europe.

“ Permit us to assure your Majesty that, while we feel our hearts and hopes thus elated by the brilliant success which has crowned your Majesty’s arms abroad, we congratulate your Majesty no less sincerely on the uninterrupted state of security in which this kingdom has been preserved against the vain attacks of the enemy, by the extent of your Majesty’s military preparations, and still more by the zeal and spirit which animate all ranks of your Majesty’s subjects in the cause of their country.

“ Nor have we seen with less satisfaction the entire disappointment of the attempts of the enemy against your Majesty’s kingdom of Ireland, the defeat and surrender of the force which they had disembarked for the support of a rebellion instigated by themselves, and the capture or dispersion of the armaments destined for the same object: and we trust that the rebellion, thus cut off from foreign assistance, and curbed and repressed as it has been by the vigor of your Majesty’s Councils, and the gallantry of your troops, will, ere long, be finally extinguished.

“ We are anxious to declare to your Majesty and to the world our abhorrence of the views and principles of those, who, in concert with our inveterate enemy, had planned the subversion of the constitution of their country; and we cannot but feel persuaded that the complete exposure of these treasons must awaken the deluded to a sense of their duty, and must impress still more strongly on the minds of all your Majesty’s subjects, the necessity of supporting against every attack the laws and government of their country.

“ Convinced of the extent and value of the blessings which, under your Majesty’s happy and paternal Government, we have to defend, and confident in the resources and spirit of our country, we have encountered with cheerfulness many and great difficulties. These, by the blessings of providence on your Majesty’s dignified firmness and perseverance in a just cause, have happily been surmounted.

“ Animated by this success, encouraged by the comparative

situation of our country, and, above all, deeply impressed with a sense of that duty which is incumbent on every individual in a period of general danger and calamity, we will not relax our exertions, but will to the utmost of our power support your Majesty in every measure which may best contribute to deliver unimpaired to posterity, the security, independence and honour of the British empire."

Lord CRAVEN seconded the motion. Nothing, he said, could afford more sincere pleasure, or inspire more pride in the heart of a man, than the description which His Majesty's gracious speech had given of the present condition of this country. After being deserted in the course of the war by the allies, whose cause we had come forward to espouse, it was gratifying to see the noble stand that we had made, and the success we had obtained against the common enemy of mankind. By our single exertions the navy of the French Republic was annihilated. Her boasted army of England had lost even its title, and every enterprise she had undertaken against us was completely defeated. Not only our coasts at home, but our most valuable possessions abroad, were secured; domestic treason, aided by her means, was quelled, and the progress of her ambition abroad was checked, if not destroyed. Through the vigilance of our marine, of all the squadrons which the French had sent out for the insidious purpose of assisting the rebellion they had created in Ireland, but one had reached the place of its destination, and even that had failed of withstanding the efforts of His Majesty's well directed force. He heartily concurred, therefore, with the noble Earl in the just eulogium he had paid to the virtue and gallantry of our naval officers and seamen, whose services demanded every return of gratitude from their country. He concurred also with the noble Earl with regard to the advantages which would naturally flow from the recent successes. There was but one branch of commerce which this country did not almost exclusively possess, namely, that of the Levant, and of that trade France would now be totally deprived, and this country would reap all the advantages which had before belonged to our enemy in that quarter, which alone contributed to the maintenance of her navy. The present situation of Buonaparte was also an advantage of the victory of the Nile. Cut off from all means of retreat, and beset on every side with obstacles. And this was not all—these successes had already given spirit and alacrity to several of the foreign powers, who had unequivocally declared their determination to join against the common enemy. Russia and the Ottoman Porte had already declared themselves, and he had no doubt but that Austria, though unwilling, would find it her interest to join in the great united ex-

ertion which the example of our Government had recommended to all Europe, and without which it would be vain to look either for security or peace.

The Marquis of LANSDOWN. My Lords, I never had the honour to join my feeble voice with that of noble Lords who went before me with more pleasure, than I now join in the just tribute of gratitude and applause that have been given to our gallant navy for their wonderful, glorious, and patriotic exertions in the service of their country. I should have particular delight in dwelling on their merits, if I could hope to add any thing to what has been so ably and so sensibly said by the two noble Lords who have gone before me. They have done their duty in the encomiums they have given to our great naval commanders. It becomes us all to join in the thanks which are due; but, my Lords, after this duty is performed, and after we have rendered to those great men the applause which they deserve, there is another duty which will rest upon the King's Ministers and upon your Lordships to perform; the duty of drawing from those victories the advantages they are calculated to secure. I know the heart of Lord Nelson so well, that I can speak to your Lordships with confidence of the gratification which will be dearest to his feelings. It is not the praise of compliments, it is not the tribute of mere loud and empty applause that will satisfy a patriotic heart like his, for he will feel that the boast of a victory is fleeting, which produces no more than momentary triumph; that victory can only be dear to a patriot's heart which is improved and made necessary to the only legitimate end of war, national tranquillity by a safe and honourable peace. I am sure, my Lords, that I shall speak the sentiments, not only of that great man, but of every distinguished officer in the service who has contributed to the astonishing glories of our naval campaign, when I say that they will feel disappointed if their triumphs shall not produce the advantage to Great Britain which with wise management they are calculated to confer. When I say this, my Lords, I desire to be rightly understood. I am satisfied that it is of consequence, not only to the repose and security of Great Britain, but of the world in general, to check the progress of the French Revolution. It is not necessary, nor is it consistent with sound policy to load with opprobrium even the enemy; but it is impossible, my Lords, to speak of the conduct of the French without using the language of the most unequivocal reprobation; the course of havoc and devastation, their unprincipled and detestable tyranny, corruption and baseness, must excite in every bosom that cherishes the principles of liberty as the supreme good, and the happiness of hu-

man kind as the end of every rational Government, a steady resolution to check their career, and to save the world from the horrible calamity to which they doom it. I have no hesitation, my Lords, in saying, that this is my feeling. They have provoked it by their rapacity, by their treachery, and by the horrors they have spread around them; and I rejoice to see that it is the prevailing sentiment and feeling of the world. No man who has observed the progress of their arms, and examined the spirit of their designs, but must join in the indignation which I express. But, my Lords, it is another thing how the progress of their atrocity is to be checked; and here it is that I request your Lordships to pause and to inquire if you are in the right course. The question is, have we the power to accomplish it by the means which we have taken? Have we not the experience of five years to prove to us, that we have undertaken the task in a way not calculated to obtain the end? What likelihood is there that we shall be more prosperous for the future than we have heretofore been? I confess to you, my Lords, that here I find myself disappointed; I do not see the means of obtaining the end specified and set forth in His Majesty's speech. I flattered myself that I should have heard of a great and well-organized plan, going directly to the object in which all the great powers of Europe had concurred, and in which all other views and purposes were to be laid aside; and, my Lords, it never was denied, it never could be denied by any man, that the powers of Europe would have been at every period of the French Revolution, and are at this moment, able to check and put an end to their career and mischief, provided that they would go to the task with honest intentions; provided that their confederacy was not distracted by views of a mercenary kind, by plans of rapine and aggrandizement, by feelings of jealousy and distrust, and by the intervention of all the little despicable intrigue, which ought never to be suffered to enter into great combinations. It never, I say, my Lords, was denied but that if at length a sense of general danger should bring the powers of Europe to a league upon honest principles, they must prevail over the revolutionary system, and it was my hope that His Majesty's Ministers had improved the late victory of the Nile to this great purpose; that they had displayed to them the advantages of magnanimity, and before they came to Parliament to announce the continuance of war, had incorporated those powers in a great and disinterested league, in which, instead of disgracing themselves by looking to this country for subsidies, they had resumed the dignity which became them, and had at length resolved on going directly to the object of restoring security to Europe without seeking

in its disorders their own temporary profit. My Lords, I am disappointed to find none of this in the speech from the Throne; I see nothing held out to me upon which I can repose; I hear no account of returning wisdom or of returning magnanimity. Who that knows the jealousies that subsist between the great powers of Europe can flatter himself that, until they are done away, any system of co-operation can be successful against France? Every person who has ever had an opportunity of mixing in society, every body who has ever been upon the Continent of Europe in the tour of his education, must have seen that the rooted enmity between Austria and Prussia descends even to the private soldier, and actuates the very ranks of their armies. And unless I shall see that a conviction of common danger shall make them enter into a more generous union of effort than any that they have hitherto done, I confess to you that I shall not form any sanguine hope to myself of accomplishing the object by the means of continental league. The noble Lord says there are symptoms of confederation—symptoms! my Lords; we want more than symptoms; we must have something more express, something more solid to rely upon before we can expect that Europe can be delivered from its dangers, and the world have redress. We are told of the vigour manifested by Russia and the Porte. It is impossible, my Lords, to hear this presented to the people of England as a ground of confidence and hope without astonishment. What! a conjunction between the Russians and the Turks? It is impossible to speak of so monstrous an idea without ridicule. We all know that their mutual distrust and jealousy exceeds that of all other nations. It is hereditary; the child sucks it in with his mother's milk; it is made a part of their education, and becomes a habit of their nature. We all know that the family upon the Throne of the Russias have uniformly cherished the notion that Constantinople is to be a part of their inheritance. With this view, what is the name they have given to the second son, the brother of the present Emperor? It has always been their politics, and I fear that it is not likely to be abandoned at a moment the most favourable to its views. And is it from a coalition of this sort that we are to derive hopes of vigorous operation against France? We do not argue like politicians if we yield ourselves to so false an imagination. And what is the Ottoman Porte? Do we not know that the most helpless of all the countries upon earth is Turkey? The united concurrence of every historian the most recent, and the more convincing testimony of facts, prove that they are not merely incapable of external operations; but even of domestic defence. Have they not been even

now defeated in more than thirty attacks upon one rebellious Pacha? They are incapable of resisting the rebellion of a subject! Is it from such a country that we can look for vigorous co-operation, or is it upon such a league that we can safely repose? My Lords, the experience that we have had ought to teach us distrust; it ought to impress upon our minds a conviction of the hollow principle upon which combinations of this kind are formed. When we see a court so little actuated by motives of honour and justice as to forfeit its obligations, can we afterwards have confidence in its fidelity? In private life what would you say of a man who was even tardy or negligent in discharging his duties? If any of your Lordships should advance to a man in necessity a sum of money to enable him to carry on a just claim to estates that were withheld from him, and by such succour he succeeded in his lawsuit, would you not say that his first duty was to repay the noble Lord the sum he had borrowed with gratitude for the aid by which he had been saved from ruin, and what term of reproach would not be his due, if he should fail in this act of justice? My Lords, what is true of an individual is true of a Court. You have assisted the great powers of the Continent—one of them contracted large engagements with you, and was enabled through your means to make valuable acquisitions. I do not find, from His Majesty's speech, that that power has come forward to discharge its obligations; I do not find that that power has given any assurance that he will repay the loan which he raised under the guarantee of the British Government, and therefore I say again, my Lords, that even if a new combination should be made with courts that have only hitherto looked to their own distinct and individual objects, and who have deserted the common cause the instant that they had obtained some miserable acquisition to themselves, we can have no prospect of advantage from such a league. Nay, my Lords, if the jealousies of these great powers should again be stifled for the moment, I should not think it all that was necessary to the combined movement of Europe against France. I should demand the concurrence and the exertion of the northern powers also. It is material that the powers of the Baltic should join in the confederacy; but I see nothing of all this, and yet we are told that we are to continue the war upon the ground of hollow and disjointed combination, and that combination neither general nor disinterested. Are they less sensible of their danger than we are? Are they less liable to feel the atrocity of the French system? It surely will not be said that they are. The security that we derive from our marine, from our insular situation, from public opinion, make us certainly more secure than any kingdom on the Continent; and when we see that

they make use of us only for their own ends; that, however solemn their engagements, they desert us without a struggle of conscience, and make their peace whenever they have made their acquisition, can we again entangle ourselves with such confederates? I anticipate the reply to all this, "How can we make peace?" After repeated trials it has been shewn that it is impossible to negotiate with the French Directory." Your Lordships know my opinion upon this; I do not desire that His Majesty's Government should humiliate itself; I have always given my opinion on what I conceive to be the proper and becoming manner for a great country like this to act. I do not know what may now be the disposition of the French Directory towards peace; I have no means of knowing it. When I had reason to believe there was a disposition and an opening, I did not fail to give my opinion and my advice. Their repeated trials, they say, have failed; they know best whether they ought to have failed. I do not wish to exasperate; if they were sincere, I only lament that they did not take the most dignified course, nor the most likely to obtain the end. The course that I have always recommended is that which is open and unequivocal. I would have your Lordships to shew by your conduct, that you seek for no other object than security and peace; that you will support the Government, who shall act upon this single principle; and let it be made manifest to all the world, that England looks to nothing else. It is particularly dignified to make this declaration in the moment of conquest. I have said, that I do not know how the French Directory may be now disposed; but I know that it can never be unseasonable to make the avowal of your system. Political situations are always changing! every six months produces a new æra, and gives rise to new ideas in states, as well as in individuals. The France of this day, is not the France of last year; and therefore, however indisposed they were upon the last experiment, it is now worth the trial. I do not mean that you should send to offer it, but choose the moment of victory to make it manifest that you look to nothing else; and that you are constantly ready and prepared to make it. After such declaration, should they refuse it, our course is clear and safe. Let us lay aside all idle plans of conquest and acquisition which we cannot maintain, witness Corsica and St. Domingo, and let us only think of cheap and economical defence. Let us refuse our assent to all continental intrigues in which it is likely that the French will out-manceuvre us, for it is clear that in all the progress of their system, they have gained full as much by intrigue as they have by arms. To all such intrigues this country ought to be a stranger, and all combinations which

have intrigue for their origin, are as much against the interests of Great Britain as they are against those of humanity. The powers that combine with you for selfish purposes, are only true to their engagements against France until they have succeeded in their views, and then they become French in their turn. The Directory know this, and take their advantages of it; they are not weak enough to dread the confederacies that are made of such materials, for that which has been accomplished by corruption and bribery, they know may be counteracted by the same means. We ought to be above the meanness of this crooked course. No man feels the high situation of this country more than I do; and we ought to reap the advantages of that situation. Let us display a disinterested spirit in our system, and above all, mark our character by moderation. It is the policy, and it ought to be the pride of this country. At home the Crown has gained every thing; it cannot, and it ought not to look for any farther accession of power. Opposition has disappeared—some say it is dead and buried, and that Opposition as a party is no more. I am told so, but I speak of it without any personal knowledge—I never was a party man; but it is extinguished, and it is a great opportunity for the Crown to take such high and advantageous ground, as by securing popular opinion, to prevent the growth of all party again. The present is a most favourable moment for securing the unanimity which now prevails. To conciliate popular opinion ought to be the great object. The attachment of the people is stronger and more valuable than a hundred parties. By keeping down the expences, by introducing economy and order into every department of the state, by putting an end to the conceptions of influence, you can prevent the revival of party, you will reap the true advantages of your present situation. I shall certainly think it my duty to give my support to every vigorous measure that shall serve to put the country into a still more advantageous position. I think it right and political that by one great operation of finance you should keep down those irksome, petty, and unproductive exactions which fret and disturb men's minds, and create an irritation which would again favour the views of faction. It is your duty, my Lords, to support a great and liberal plan that shall set the Government above the necessity of petty shifts. You ought to be swilled with patronage; it has gone more than its proper length, and in order to preserve the union which the course of events has so happily brought about, you ought to join in any extensive and disinterested plan by which the country shall learn that you are actuated by a zeal proportionate to your high condition in the State. I shall certainly think it my duty to support the Government in this course, always reserving to myself my longing after peace. We are told

of strong measures which are in contemplation; rumours of an Union with Ireland, and so forth. My Lords, it is not the time for me to pronounce any opinion upon that great question. I have no hesitation, however, in saying, that if the plan upon which we are in future to go on, is a plan of Government by public opinion, it shall have my countenance and support: if it be a plan of governing by expence, by corruption, and influence, I shall think it my duty to oppose it, whatever title it may bear. I think that we are come to that point in our history, when we must resume the good sense of our ancestors, and govern by public opinion, not by bribery, patronage and corruption. When instead of looking merely to great families, we must look to the people; and when, instead of the grasp and range of influence, we must trust to the economy with which every branch of the Government is administered. So much for our home affairs. With respect to our external position, I repeat it, my Lords, that you have but one practicable course; and it is, to declare that you will steadily, through a cheap defensive system, look only to attain a solid, permanent, and honourable peace.

Lord ROMNEY said, Ministers had shewn such a zeal, activity and diligence in carrying on this war against our most inveterate enemy, that he was perfectly satisfied they deserved the highest praise; but, says his Lordship, I shall not say any thing upon that subject, because I do not wish any of your Lordships' time to be taken up in the consideration of it now, especially as the noble Lords who have preceded me in this debate, have already spoken upon the subject. I shall only say that I have the pleasure to coincide in opinion with the noble Lords who moved and seconded the address now before your Lordships.

The noble Marquis who spoke last alluded to the opinion of the people on the subject of the late negotiation for peace between this country and France; and he stated how essential it is that the opinion of the people should be with his Majesty's Ministers, and that they should think them sincere; whether the negotiation was well conducted or not on our part, I will not pretend to determine, because I do not feel that I am competent to such a determination, but forming an opinion as well as I am able, I must say, because I feel, that it was well conducted. I am sure it had the effect of convincing the people of England that His Majesty's Ministers were sincere.

We hear much said of the misfortunes of the present war, and there are some who continually call it "this unfortunate war." It is unfortunate, certainly, my Lords, on account of the expence with

which it is attended ; but taking that out of the consideration, which I think we ought to do, for it is unavoidable, then I would say that this country never carried on any war that was more successful than the present.

As to the observations that are made upon speeches from the Throne, and how little reliance is to be placed on promises that may be there held forth, and the inconveniences that may arise from your Lordships remaining still until treaties are concluded, I can only say that such is the course of things under the very nature of our Government. Your Lordships can have nothing but hints in speeches from the Throne until treaties are concluded ; for until then, no regular information comes before this House, and therefore, you can have nothing but the information which is conveyed to you by the speech from the Throne, which speech your Lordships have a right to make observations upon, because it is always considered as the speech of the Minister.

The noble Marquis asks, what there is in the condition of Turkey to make that power the subject of our hope ? What there is that may be said to have been successful with regard to them ? I can only say, that they have lately been very successful, for they have seen their errors with regard to their conduct towards France ; they now see they ought long ago to have opposed the French with the utmost vigour. They have now opened their eyes, and they are determined to act with vigour. They have seen that this country is true to its engagements, and they now wish to form new alliances.

The Emperor Paul is also taken notice of in the speech from the throne ; his character, I believe, deserves praise—he is indeed different from his predecessor Catherine ; his system of internal policy is moderation ; he does not wish people to be kept in dungeons. I have no doubt but that a prince so remarkable for virtue will be faithful to his engagements, and therefore, I confess, I am glad of the alliance between him and this country.

I have heard a rumour, that Denmark and Sweden are arming, and that the other powers are making great preparations ; I hope the rumour is true. If Europe had made a common cause against the French, they would have been long ago successful, and the *Great Nation* must have given way to them ; but it is not yet too late, and I cannot help thinking that the contest in which we are engaged, is now more favourable than ever it was before this time.

With regard to our finances, I see nothing to alarm us ; nor are those who are supposed to see these points pretty clearly, at all in a state of despondency, for the funds are higher than they have been

for a considerable time. We possess great advantages at this moment ; the leading one is, that we are now an united and a vigorous people, and I hope we shall at last arrive at a safe and an honourable peace. As to the conquests which we made, and which the noble Marquis says we could not keep ; witness, he says, Saint Domingo and Corfica ; I can only observe, that these are not the only conquests which we have made, for I would say to the noble Marquis, witness Saint Lucie, Martinique, and the Cape of Good Hope. I do not know that we have yet thought of giving any of these up, but I will not pretend to judge of the policy of giving some places up and of retaining others ; some we may give up, because they are found to be untenable. I do not pretend to know the consequences of these that have been given up ; these are points which I leave to the wisdom of His Majesty's Ministers ; they, in my opinion, ought to decide those points for us, because they have the best means for forming correct judgements. I do not feel myself competent to decide upon them.

Lord HOLLAND. Promises have been from time to time held forth to us, and which have been from time to time almost uniformly broken, that I own, however gratifying it might be to my feelings if I could, I cannot agree in all the sentiments which were conveyed to your Lordships in the speech from the Throne to-night, and which are repeated in the address which is now before you. I am under the necessity of taking notice of some parts of the sentiments of the noble Lords who moved and seconded the address ; I will allow to these noble Lords all they can desire in the argument ; I will consider all the victories we have gained, as additions to the national credit and honour ; for no man can be more willing than myself to dwell with pleasure on the victories of our country ; I will allow that whenever our naval force has met that of the enemy, we have, without a single exception, been successful ; yet, with all these advantages, I confess it appeared to me, that the noble Lords who moved and seconded the address, failed to prove that, which it was their great object to establish, namely, that the next combination of the powers of Europe will procure for this country an advantageous peace. I have already said, that no man can rejoice more sincerely than myself at our late victory ; but then, my Lords, let us look what use is likely to be made of it. If the only advantage which we are to gain by it, be merely to revive the horrors of war ; if Ministers intend only to avail themselves of this opportunity, to spread the devastations of war over the surface of the globe, more generally than has hitherto been done ; I own, I do not see any reason for exultation. I confess it has ap-

peared to me for some time, that this is the disposition of His Majesty's Ministers, instead of making it the means of obtaining that which alone is the first object of all war, namely, peace. Would to God, my Lords, that such were the views of Ministers! but it is impossible to suppose that such is their serious intention. The very language of the speech holds out a contrary sentiment. We hear indeed of the powerful effects of a new confederacy; it is held out to you now in the speech from the Throne; but this is not the first time you have heard from the Throne, of the probable effect of a powerful confederacy against France; and I wish to know what there is now in your situation, which should induce you to think that the confederacy now about to be formed, (for I have not heard of its being yet completed) will be of a firmer texture, and more durable and efficacious, than those which have been tried already. The truth of the matter indeed is, that all confederacies are liable to be dissolved from the contrariety of interests, unavoidable accidents, and the natural jealousies which the confederates have for each other. These are evils which are inseparable from all confederacies whatever, and there are as many of them applicable to the different powers of Europe, now, perhaps, as there ever were at any former time. I say this, not from the characters of the different powers, (which by the way would justify me), but I say it from the experience of positive acts, which are almost equal to demonstration. I have no scruple in saying, that the former confederacy of Princes was one of the chief causes of the calamities which the French Revolution had produced. I say then, my Lords, that experience teaches you it is impossible to have any advantage to this country by any confederacy whatever. Compare the situation of this country at this moment with its condition at the commencement of hostilities, and then ask yourselves, my Lords, what is likely to be the result of your proceeding? If so many victories cannot gain you peace, what is a new confederacy to produce? You have lost some things by treachery, and others you have gained by conquest; but yet I do not see that your condition is in the least degree amended. And here I cannot help observing, that while we remember (how is it possible to forget?) how we have treated some States: how our friendship has been the ruin of some people; it is not very handsome, nor very generous, to talk much of the manner in which some States have lost their power and consequence for want of having sufficiently resisted the attacks of France. I say, my Lords, this is neither generous nor handsome in us when we know that some States have, for the present at least, been blotted out of the map, in consequence of our most friendly interference. With regard to the union of other

powers, and the reliance that we ought to place on their sincerity towards us, let us recollect that we have not had one of them in alliance with us who has not deserted us. Austria, the most considerable of them all, was only a drain upon us, and a temptation for the conquest of the enemy. But my observations are not confined merely to the weakness of any confederacy, and the improbability there is of its even continuing for a sufficient time, or in sufficient force, to be effectual; or of the probability there is that they will deceive us again if we trust to them; but my observation extends to an object of another nature—I mean that the late glorious victory we obtained over the French ought to induce us to shew a disposition for peace; for that is the truly wise use that should be made of the advantage you have gained. Indeed if you do not shew that disposition when you are successful, I do not know when, with any advantage, you can shew it; for if you shew it after an adverse fortune, either your sincerity or your courage will be doubted. Then I ask, what period is to be fixed for the termination of this contest? We have been told that the French never shew any disposition for peace when they are successful; but if that be so, it is a defect in them, and we ought not to imitate it. I think the tone of the French is lowered, in some particulars at least—I may be told that is because they feel they are weak; to which I answer, if it be so, we should now try what may be done towards pacification, for they may gain strength again, and then they will be less easy to deal with than they are at present. If any noble Lord should think any part of what I say worthy of observation, and should observe, that what I am urging tends to recommending humiliation to this country, I should answer, that there is not a man in this country who would scorn to do so more than the person who has now the honour of addressing your Lordships;—but I must declare, what some may think foolish, but I shall declare it, because it appears to me founded in sound sense, That to shew a disposition for peace in the hour of prosperity, is not a humiliation, but a magnanimity. And I do not think that the people of this country would think it humiliating if a peaceable disposition was now manifested in their name by His Majesty's Ministers; and yet I am well assured that they would not now (I hope they never will) hear of any peace that was not consistent with their honour and their interest. I am so far from thinking that the people would have any wishes that are inconsistent with the future glory, as well as the present comfort, of this country, if they had the means of deciding the present contest, that I wish, with all my heart, they had their due weight and power in the Government.

With regard to the diminution of our expence, it would give me great satisfaction if it could be brought about with safety ; but I must confess, however desirable that might be, I do not see much probability of it at present ; and, indeed, I should not pay much attention to the subject, if I heard any assurances made upon it from the highest authority, for I have observed, that in the years when we had the strongest assurances of retrenchment, our expenditure has most remarkably increased.

I feel the difficulty of succeeding, in the hour of victory, in any attempt to moderate desire. I know it is an unwelcome task to talk to your Lordships of a disposition to peace : but, nevertheless, I cannot help urging it, because I feel it to be my duty to do so. But when noble Lords talk of a great spirit in this House for the continuation of the war, I feel the effect of that observation. I ought to apologize to your Lordships for taking up your time : but I feel that the spirit is likely to continue, and I fear the effect of it. I do not think I pass the bounds of order when I say we have fresh recruits continually poured into this House to fight for His Majesty's Ministers.

Lord MULGRAVE was sorry to offer himself to the notice of their Lordships, in consequence of what had passed in the discussion, but his personal feelings induced him to join in the general expressions of joy and congratulation on the glorious achievements of Lord Nelson. The gallant Admiral had, in his earliest years, given the most signal proofs of future skill and gallantry. He had been educated in an excellent school, and even at that youthful period afforded expectations so well grounded and so sanguine, as not to be surpassed by the brilliant and unparalleled victory which he had gained. Mingling his tribute of applause in the burst of general joy, on an event so unexampled in its lustre, and so advantageous in its result, he confessed he had little disposition to enter into the arguments advanced by the noble Marquis for proposing terms of peace to such an enemy as we had to contend with. The noble Lord had maintained, that we were, under the present circumstances, bound to come forward and negotiate. But what was the situation of both countries ? Was the noble Lord supported in his statement by a candid review of the circumstances in which they both stood ? Were the Governments equal in points of justice ? Were they equal in point of sound policy ? Were they equal in popularity ? If they were not, he would ask, Was the present moment a time for the display of unmerited and injudicious moderation ? Was it a time to crouch to the intemperate views of inordinate ambition, and to seek for precarious security ? No ! it was,

on the contrary, a time for inspiring unanimity and vigour, for infusing constancy and courage into the powers which were threatened with dissolution, and for rescuing from oppression and every species of misery, the countries which had unfortunately fallen victims to the arbitrary measures, and the boundless tyranny of the French Republic. Our proposals to make peace on former occasions had been converted into arguments against us, and had operated in exciting exertions against ourselves. They had deluded the enemy to think that we could no longer carry on the war, and that they had been dictated by imperious necessity, but it was a delusion for which the enemy had justly and dearly suffered, and which in the end proved the happy instrument of our triumph and exultation. However he might lament the private distresses of many, and that the tears of individuals were shed on various occasions, the general exultation was complete and satisfactory, for it was founded on the general good, on the preservation, the glory, and the happiness of the country. Great Britain stood in a high and glorious situation, in a proud and honourable pre-eminence, at the head of Europe, offering her protection to the states distressed or threatened by the common enemy; let them then come under her shield, which is raised for their defence and security! The noble Lord had made a most wonderful discovery. He had found out that it was not the sanguinary Government of France which had diffused ruin and desolation throughout the Continent, but that it was our interference and our mildness which had set Europe in a flame. There was nothing, in the opinion of that noble Lord, on our part, but a disposition to commence a war, and an indisposition to conclude it. Such were the wonderful discoveries made by the noble Lord, and they certainly would possess in the general opinion that degree of credit to which their extraordinary merit and ingenuity entitled them. The noble Marquis had asserted that no concert, no systematic plan of co-operation could exist between nations jealous of one another. That Austria and Prussia were jealous of each other when they entered into the war, and became parties in the coalition, he was ready to admit; and the noble Marquis was welcome to every benefit he could derive from a concession so limited. But he would ask, Was not the situation of these powers most materially altered since that period? Had Austria and Prussia seen no example of ruin produced by improvidently and rashly indulging in sentiments of jealousy? They were at length sensible of the necessity of pursuing with united firmness measures calculated to promote their true interests; and he would undertake to say, that with the salutary impression of their past experience, he should have more just

confidence in their present alliance than in that of the most amicable nations in a former war. The unexpected co-operation between Russia and the Ottoman Porte had been held out as a junction that could not be permanent, or attended with any solid advantages. But what could have induced the Grand Seignior, with all the prejudices with which he was supposed to be tainted against his new ally, to suffer the Russian fleet to pass the Dardanelles, but the dreadful example of the desolation and horrors held out to him by the ambition and rapacity of the French in Europe? Were any unbiaſſed person to take a view of the reſpective ſituation of England and France, he could not ſubſcribe to the language of humiliation which had been recommended by the noble Lord. The one was high in general eſtimation, fruitful in reſources, venerated for the punctual performance of engagements, and ſeeking no benefits but thoſe to which ſhe was entitled by the civilised intercourſe of mankind, and a ſtrict and ſacred adherence to the eſtabliſhed laws of nations. The other was degraded in the opinion of the world, debaſed by her repeated breaches of public faith, poſſeſſing no reſources but thoſe ariſing from violence, and therefore of a perſhable nature; with no other ſinews of war but thoſe furniſhed by the furious ſpirit of rapacity—a nation which, having exhausted thoſe countries that had fallen ſacrifices to open force or treachery, had been compelled to ſend an expedition to Egypt for the purpoſe of providing reſources which it was impoſſible to procure at home. The very idea of entering into any negociation at preſent with a Government of that deſcription, and of conſequently checking the reviving ſpirit of Europe, would, in his mind, not only militate againſt the true and ſubſtantial intereſts of the country, but afford an unqueſtionable proof of puſillanimity and meaneſs.

Lord HOLLAND ſaid, he was ſorry to be obliged again to trouble their Lordſhips; but he could not allow them to remain under the impreſſion, which the noble Lord who had juſt ſat down had endeavoured to give—that he had ſpoke of the moderation of France lately, and in every inſtance, or that he had imputed the ſtate of ſeveral countries in Europe, ſolely to the Britiſh Cabinet. There was a great difference between contributing to an end, and being the ſole cauſe of it. The Miniſters of this country might have brought about the ſtate of things under which the calamities into which theſe countries had fallen neceſſarily followed. He had never ſaid, that the French had always been moderate in their conduct. It was not in the nature of Frenchmen, or in the character of any government in France, republican or monarchical, to be always moderate. This he had contended, however, that there

had been periods, in which conciliation on the part of this country would, even in the moment of the highest prosperity of France, lead to peace. It was certainly an ungracious task to remind their Lordships that these opportunities had been lost. He did not mean to enter into the discussion now. He trusted a time would come, when it would be solemnly taken up; when the people of this country would call for it. If he had advanced the propositions which the noble Lord had ascribed to him, he would have justly been the object of ridicule; but the arguments which the noble Lord ridiculed were of his own making. He had contended, indeed, that the sums of money sent abroad by this country, had continued the war on the Continent without advantage; that this war had tended to consolidate the power of France. He lamented to say, that the endeavours of the British Cabinet, and the coalition they put in motion to crush the French Revolution, had placed the French in a situation which made them for a time the disturbers of Europe. Experience had proved how inadequate a former coalition had been to overcome the power of France, and he saw no reason to imagine that the coalition which was about to be renewed, would be more successful.

Lord GRENVILLE spoke nearly as follows—After the very able manner in which the different topics before you have been discussed by the noble Lords who have spoken in favour of the address, nothing should now have called me up, to trouble your Lordships with any additional arguments of mine, but that I was unwilling to allow some observations which dropped from the noble Lord who has just sat down, to pass in silence. The noble Lord has alluded to certain points, on which he hopes that the moment for discussion will arrive. Let not the noble Lord imagine, that I will shrink from such a discussion; let him not think that I will ever be afraid to meet him, or any man, to argue that question. I call upon the noble Lord to identify dates and circumstances, to point out the time when His Majesty's Ministers were backward to embrace and to improve any favourable opportunity which promised to lead to a safe and honourable peace. On the contrary, as my noble friend has well observed, if Ministers were at all to blame, it was in being too forward to testify their anxiety for peace; facts and documents are on record, and will shew whether the charge which the noble Lord has urged, be well founded. But surely never was there a worse occasion than the present for renewing these questions. There have been times indeed when France, in the career of her success, was able to dictate terms to those who sued her for peace. There have been moments when it

was found necessary to abandon Europe, because Europe had abandoned itself. There have been moments when it was impossible to oppose with vigour and effect the progress of France, because it was impossible to awaken other powers to their true interests, or rather, to infuse reason into their Councils. There have been Statesmen who argued like the noble Lord and his friends; who by a mean and a temporising policy, compromised their own dignity, and left France mistress of Europe. What has produced that lamentable degraded state of several of the powers of Europe, but counsels such as those which the noble Lord, and those with whom he has acted, have uniformly recommended? What has endangered the subversion of civilized society, and the overthrow of the system of Europe, but paltry, shameful disunion; but those shifting, selfish politics, which have to-night been applauded; till at last, after France has for years been strengthened by the resources of plunder, the misery of republican domination has driven those countries to that resistance which they were afraid to exert when their strength and their means were entire? It is not with sorrow, but with pride and satisfaction, that I acknowledged that I have never submitted to you the necessity of different policy. I have valued too much the testimony of my own conscience, the feelings of national honour, the dictates of public duty, and, perhaps, those frail memorials which may remain of me, should men take the trouble to inquire how I have thought and acted in this great crisis, ever to advise any other than a vigorous, manly line of conduct, or to recommend any resource but in our constancy and perseverance. It has ever been the opinion which I have entertained and avowed, that if France remained mistress of the Continent, you could have no safety. That though by the desertion and timidity of other powers you might be driven to separate negotiation, yet, whatever might be the importance and glory of your own successes, you could never have a good and secure peace. Disunion, mean, shifting policy, have occasioned all the calamities under which a considerable part of Europe now groans. Now, however, there is something more than mere symptoms of the return of other sentiments, and the prevalence of other views. There is more than symptoms to shew that the powers on the Continent are willing to embrace a line of conduct more suited to their interests. This then is not the moment for England to shew that she is guided only by little selfish politics. Instead of resigning Europe to its fate, and abandoning the victims of French domination to their misery, it ought to be the business of England to animate their efforts, and contribute to their deliverance. It is rather the duty of the Ministers of this country, supported by

King and Parliament, to say that we are ready to assist the rest of Europe ; that we are willing to aid them by our counsels ; to support them with our resources ; to conciliate differences ; to allay jealousies ; to unite their efforts—and not, by reviving former systems, by enflaming old jealousies, and encouraging former rivalships, to prevent that co-operation and concert which is so necessary to the general safety of Europe, and so connected with the true interest of the country.

Such is the system upon which I have acted, nor can any man so far mistake the principle of that system, as to imagine that Ministers have been averse to avail themselves of any favourable opportunity for a safe and honourable peace. The noble Marquis has observed, that those victories should only have been remembered which led to peace : and the noble Lord who spoke last said, that the attainment of an immediate peace was the only legitimate object of war. I have ever understood, however, that those victories were the most renowned and celebrated which were gained in self-defence, and that the most legitimate of all wars was that which is waged for that great object. To the fullest praise in both these respects, the glorious victory of Lord Nelson is entitled. That noble Lord will indeed do that which the noble Lord who spoke last has referred to so invidiously ; he will bring with him into this House, a true martial spirit, and honours as well earned as those which ennobled the ancestors of either of the noble Lords. Nor will this brilliant victory be without its advantages. Notwithstanding what has been asserted, and whether peace be immediate or more remote, there can be no peace negotiated by this country, in which that great achievement will not form a leading consideration. These are the counsels which we have offered, and these are the principles which, in my official capacity, I have urged to the Governments upon the Continent. Shall I then be told that this advice has occasioned the calamities which have befallen part of Europe ? At the beginning of the contest, when Holland was endeavouring by negotiation to avoid the danger with which it was threatened, we endeavoured to inculcate the principle that such a compromise would infallibly lead to ruin and to misery. The words in His Majesty's speech, in which the conduct of Holland was characterised in this way, was styled by a person at that time, a " diabolical paragraph." Circumstances, however, have since too fatally proved how correctly true was the doctrine we urged, and how well founded was the caution which we held out. The Dutch thought that by negotiation they would obtain the barrier of peace instead of the barrier of resistance, and they fell headlong into the destruc-

tion which they endeavoured to avoid. Our situation is compared in His Majesty's speech with the situation of other countries, and the comparison is called ungenerous. We have seen, however, to what causes the calamities of our allies may be ascribed, but the comparison is not confined to allies alone. What is the situation of those powers which yet stand in a trembling, degraded, precarious existence, purchased by dishonour? Look at those who have followed that course in which the noble Lord and his friends have recommended us to seek our safety. Look at these powers, and what impartial man will deny that the comparison justifies an honest pride, that the survey approves the system on which we have acted. We have endeavoured, in a moment of difficulty and danger, to maintain the honour and independence of our country, and to support the liberties of Europe, and the proud superiority we now enjoy, the nation owes to its own constancy, its energy, and its virtue.

The Marquis of LANSDOWN observed, that in what he had said to-night he had abstained from agitating any topics that seemed not immediately connected with the discussion before the House. He had delivered his sentiments candidly, and he had hoped that they would have been received as the suggestions of one who meant to offer what he thought of real and practical importance. Since, however, the noble Lord, who just sat down, had brought forward old questions, he would frankly own that he thought favourable opportunities for concluding a safe and honourable peace had been lost, and that for the omission Ministers were severely responsible. When the noble Lord talked so exultingly of the schemes entertained for new coalitions, when he told us that we were to take the lead in Europe, he thought it a foolish, idle plan, which could terminate in nothing but confusion and disaster. He begged their Lordships to read the collections which had recently been published of the correspondence of our Statesmen since the Revolution (Lord Bolingbroke, Lord Townshend, Sir Robert Walpole, and others), and they would find how much our wisest politicians disapproved of Continental connections, the system of subsidies, and the attempt to take the lead in Europe. In his own time, he recollected to have heard a near relation of the noble Lord (Lord Grenville's father) search the English language for epithets by which to express his disapprobation of such views and politics. To be at the head of Europe, to assign to one and to take from another, might sound high, and amuse the people of this country, but it was an idle, vain, and delusive chimera. The noble Lord had himself owned the difficulties he had to encounter in forming the coalition among the

Continental powers; and he had owned too, that to support the confederacy had baffled his skill. The Duke of Marlborough, who possessed conciliatory talents in as eminent a degree as any man ever did, says with that grace which was so peculiar to him, that it was some merit to have made eight nations act as one man: Great as the Duke of Marlborough's talents were, he would venture to say, that were he alive now it would be above his talents to form such a confederacy; or to make four nations act as one man; nor would the noble Lord find it easy to make even four nations act with concert and effect. Now that experiments are to be made at the expence of so many millions, and of so many thousand lives, he would say to the noble Lord, you tried one experiment and failed, and we don't chuse that you should try it over again. The noble Lord has been deceived once, and I am afraid he will find himself deceived a second time: If, said the noble Marquis, I have any credit with the country, I stake it upon this sentiment. For several years I opposed the former attempt to take the lead in Continental coalitions; and I now oppose the attempt to renew them.

Viscount SYDNEY said, that the noble Marquis had read history very differently from him, for he could not discover that our best Statesmen had ever expressed such a disapprobation of Continental connections. The noble Marquis had referred to the authority of Lord Bolingbroke; and from his writings, indeed, he might draw all the arguments against Continental connections which now were urged, and which had been repeated by all the Jacobite writers for the last four reigns; but he did not think the authority of Lord Bolingbroke, or the principles on which the infamous treaty of Utrecht was concluded, would have great weight. As to Lord Townshend, from whom he had the honour to be descended, he never saw any thing in his correspondence which could support the observation of the noble Marquis.

The Marquis of LANSDOWN said, that all the correspondence of the Statesmen to whom he alluded, prove that they were of opinion, that this country should be careful of attempting to take the lead in Continental politics, and to cut and carve in Europe.

Lord GRENVILLE said, that his near and dear relation alluded to, never entertained such a sentiment, as that the French should be permitted to cut and carve in Europe, which was now the precise question.

The question on the address was then put and carried, *nem. diss.*

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, November 20, 1798.

A message from His Majesty was delivered by Sir Francis Molyneux, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod :

MR. SPEAKER,

The King commands this honourable House to attend His Majesty immediately in the House of Peers.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, with the House, went up to attend His Majesty ; and being returned,

A bill for the more effectual preventing clandestine outlawries was read the first time.

Resolved, That this bill be read a second time.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had issued warrants for the election of Members to serve in Parliament for the following places, viz. for Higham Ferrars, in the room of James Adair, Esq. deceased ; for Leicestershire, in the room of William Pochin, Esq. deceased ; and for Ripon, in the room of William Lawrence, Esq. deceased.

Mr. Speaker then reported that the House had attended His Majesty in the House of Peers, where His Majesty was pleased to make a most gracious speech from the Throne to both Houses of Parliament : of which, Mr. Speaker said, he had, to prevent mistakes, obtained a copy, which he read to the House.

[*For which, see the Proceedings of the Lords.*]

Lord GRANVILLE LEVISON GOWER said, he rose, pursuant to the task which he had undertaken, of moving an address in reply to the gracious speech from the Throne, which they had just heard read. He expressed his diffidence in his own talents to do justice to the various topics of that speech. But, however inadequate his abilities were to the task, it was his consolation that he could rely on the indulgence of the House, since the subject of the few observations which he had to offer possessed such strong claims on the attention of every individual, and was already developed in such forcible terms in His Majesty's speech, that the aids of eloquence were little wanting to heighten its effect. Whatever difference of opinion had formerly existed respecting the origin and conduct of the war, he believed there could now exist but one

opinion respecting the necessity of prosecuting it with vigour. The House would recollect that His Majesty had been induced to make two attempts to negotiate with France. Notwithstanding that country was far from being in such a situation as to render it probable that its Government would permanently preserve the relations of peace and amity, it was conceived that a dawn of reason had at last broke forth in France, and it was hoped that the Directory would see that it was their interest to make such a peace as this country could with honour agree to. The event, however, shewed how vain were all these expectations. There were some, indeed, who thought that the situation of this country was such as to render peace desirable upon any terms. He must allow that it was possible for a country to be so much embarrassed, as to render it prudent in the Government to make peace upon almost any terms. He should not now enter into the question whether this was, at any period of the present war, the situation of this country. Great difficulties we had certainly experienced, but we had happily surmounted them. The national credit was at one time greatly distressed. The enemy placed their expectations upon the overthrow of our funding system. The only alternative left us seemed, in the minds of many, to be national bankruptcy, or a more slow but equally certain national ruin. It was then that, for a moment, the public opinion wavered. But though public opinion ought always ultimately to influence the measures of Government, yet a wise Government, which regards the happiness of the people will never suffer itself to be influenced by those temporary fluctuations of sentiment which are inconsistent with the national dignity, and might, if not guarded against, prove injurious to the best interests of the country. It was the peculiar advantage of the British Constitution, that it was calculated to remove false impressions, and to enable the Government to lead the people back to a true sense of their interest and their duty. It was not necessary for the Government to explain to the people that remissness on their part would be attended with their own ruin. They saw that the enemy would listen to no terms of accommodation consistent with the safety or peace of the country. Terms had, indeed, been offered, but fortunately for the civilized world, these terms were rejected with disdain. The people of England saw no sacrifice would save them from the fangs of that gigantic despotism which had spread so much ruin over the Continent, they therefore resolved to oppose to it a manly and determined resistance. The spirit of the country was roused, and its ardour seemed to have increased in proportion to the difficulties it had to combat. It was this noble display of public energy which enabled

the House, in the last session, to raise the necessary supplies without any permanent addition to the public debt. The augmentation of the assessed taxes, by which this great object was effected, which gave a death blow to the hopes the enemy had cherished from the failure of our pecuniary resources, bore, no doubt, with heavy pressure on the great mass of the people : but the magnitude of the evil which they wished to avoid, made them consider its burden as comparatively light ; and they submitted with cheerfulness to the temporary privations which it occasioned. They were convinced of the sincerity of the efforts which Government had made to restore to them the blessings of peace ; and they saw the impossibility of attaining even a precarious and transient enjoyment of those blessings, but upon terms incompatible with their own honour, dignity, or interest. They had too many instances of the insatiable ambition, the unblushing perfidy of those who hold the reins of power in France, to expect any thing like moderation in their proposals, or good faith in observing them. Actuated by these feelings, the British people proceeded in willing concert with the Government. They had proved to the enemy that neither personal exertion nor pecuniary assistance would be wanting to defeat their iniquitous projects, and to vindicate the interest and the glory of the British character. In addition to the burdens imposed upon them, they had come forward with voluntary aids to an amount which exceeded the most sanguine expectation, and, from a people unaccustomed to arms, they had suddenly become a nation of soldiers. The effect of this noble and generous display of national energy was soon visible. The French Government were intimidated ; and all their mighty preparations for the invasion of this country terminated in empty gasconade. They shrunk from those ideas which they had cherished of enriching themselves by the plunder of our property ; ideas which had for a time so far flattered the French people, as to make them forget the numberless oppressions under which they groaned. The distracted state of the sister kingdom had encouraged them to make an attempt to dissolve its connection with this country, and to add the Irish people to those of the other nations of Europe, who were first the dupes of their delusions, and afterwards the victims of their rapacity. In this attempt, however, they had been completely foiled. Their repeated expeditions to the Irish shores, however favourably they might suppose the omens with which they had been undertaken, served only to involve them in fresh disappointments and disgrace. In their attempts upon that country they were aided by the co-operation of a diabolical faction within itself, powerful from the dominion which it possessed

over the prejudices, the passions, and superstitions of an ignorant multitude. This faction had supported itself by a system of organized assassination and plunder; a system, than which never had there been exhibited to the world, one more wicked in its end, or more terrible in its aspect. But all the deep-laid schemes of the enemy, and domestic traitors, were defeated by the prudence and perseverance of his Majesty's Ministers. The few troops whom the French Government had by a favourable chance succeeded in throwing upon the Irish shore, were soon compelled to surrender to His Majesty's forces. This fortunate event was succeeded by the defeat of the Brest fleet. The Dutch ships, which had the same destination, were also intercepted, and, in short, every armament they had ventured to sea, was either captured or dispersed. From these instances of British valour and discipline, it was natural to turn our view to the glorious first of August; that splendid achievement, which, in its brilliancy and its utility was unequalled in the annals of this or any other nation. It was a victory that every Englishman must view with pride and exultation; it was a striking proof that neither superiority of numbers, nor strength of position, could damp the courage, or baffle the skill of British seamen. The consequences of this achievement were alike great, whether considered in a commercial, or military point of view. In a commercial one, by the new channels of trade which it had laid open to the enterprise of our merchants; and in a military one, by the effect it already had, and would still continue to have, in rousing the spirit of the independent States of the Continent to resist the boundless ambition of France. That expedition, which had been planned against our East-India possessions, had been rendered incapable of injuring them. It was cut off from all communication with France, and must be left to its own means as they were at present, for no reinforcement could be sent to Egypt. Indeed, however painful the regret must have been when Nelson returned from his first unsuccessful pursuit of the French fleet, it was probably more fortunate for this country and Europe that no engagement took place at that time. Though no doubt could be entertained respecting the issue of the contest, still a considerable part of the enemy's fleet might have escaped; and all the intrigue of the French Government would have been employed in persuading the Turks that the expedition was not intended against any part of their territories, and it is not improbable that the Ottoman Porte would have been cajoled by the artful professions of its perfidious ally. As it was, however, the conduct of the French had roused to determined hostility a people, whom perhaps they thought too dull to apprehend their de-

signs, or too feeble to resist them. Not only had the destruction of the French fleet in the Bay of Aboukir given energy and spirit to the Turkish Government, but it had inspired all Europe with hope and joy. When the news of that great event reached Rastadt, the Deputies of the Empire for the first time ventured to resist the ambitious projects of the French Plenipotentiaries. It had also encouraged the King of Naples to oppose the common enemy, and it was to be hoped that the time was not far distant when he would be capable of crushing the infant Republics which had been erected in his neighbourhood. This great victory and all its happy consequences, were the result of the vigour, the unanimity, and spirit which had been displayed at home. The financial measures which that House had adopted, and which were sanctioned by the people at large, had enabled the Government to detach Admiral Nelson's squadron from the fleet before Cadiz, without allowing that fleet to be too much weakened for the important service it had to perform. Indeed the Board of Admiralty could not be too much praised for the judicious manner in which they had sent out reinforcements to Lord St. Vincent's fleet. Another advantage resulting from our national spirit and confidence was the increase of our national resources. Their present flourishing state was unexampled, and would be found at least more than half a million above that of any preceding year. Every branch of traffic in which our merchants had engaged, had been even more productive than in periods of the most profound peace. Some gentlemen might perhaps argue that this moment of prosperity was the best time for negotiating a peace; but gentlemen ought to recollect, that though His Majesty's Ministers had no objection to treat with France, either on account of the form of its Government, or the individuals in power, yet it was impossible to forget the character of that Government. It was from their conduct to other powers that we ought to estimate the practicability of negotiating in safety with France. Look at their treatment of Switzerland, Spain, Austria, &c. Switzerland had resisted in vain, and was enslaved, plundered and ruined, under pretext of friendship: Spain was reduced to the lowest degree of humiliation: Austria was insulted and deceived; for even during the continuance of the conferences at Rastadt, the French had taken possession of the most important fortresses of the German empire. When Russia and the Ottoman Porte have so magnanimously stepped forward in the cause of virtue and social order, when those powers that had by fraud or force been subjected to French domination, manifest a returning sense of indignant pride, and a determination to throw off the galling yoke of republican tyranny, ought that House, by talking

of an unattainable peace, to chill the ardour and paralyze the efforts of the people of England in the common cause, and at the same time to blast the hopes of every civilized state of Europe, whose sole prospect of relief centered in this country. Upon none of the topics of His Majesty's speech could there be a dissentient voice. Every one would be ready to pay a just eulogium to the glorious 1st of August, and be eager to express his congratulations on the suppression of that horrible rebellion which had so unfortunately existed in Ireland. The increase of our commerce, and the flourishing state of our resources, were also topics upon which it was natural to suppose every one would rejoice, as well as in the energy and spirit which had raised us to so proud a situation. He also hoped that every one would concur in the opinion of persevering in the same spirit and courage, which were the only means of bringing to an honourable termination the most arduous and trying contest in which the nation had ever been engaged. He concluded with moving an address to His Majesty, which reiterated in the usual manner all the different points of the speech from the Throne.

Sir H. P. St. JOHN MILD MAY said :—Sir, after the able, eloquent, and impressive language in which my noble friend has prefaced the address, I feel doubly conscious of my own insufficiency to engage the attention of the House, and I obtrude myself on their indulgence with additional diffidence and embarrassment. However the calamities inseparable from war must ever be the subject of deep and unaffected lamentation to every feeling mind, this country, at least, enjoys the consolatory reflection, that it is to the conduct of the enemy alone, that these miseries are to be attributed, whose obstinacy and inordinate ambition have rendered the continuance of the present contest, an evil without an alternative. It is fresh in the remembrance of us all, that offers of pacification, in terms of concession, that nothing but the interests of humanity could have dictated to this country, have been held out to the enemy in the face of Europe; that they have as frequently been rejected with insult the most unbounded, and under pretences the most inadmissible and extravagant; it is therefore now become a duty incumbent on us, that we owe not to ourselves, to our constituents, to our country alone, but generally to that broad system of policy that embraces the interests of all civilized society, to pursue to a conclusion the advantages we have obtained, to enforce by the vigour of our measures, by the intrepidity and gallantry of our exertions, the eventual restoration of peace, on such terms as alone any treaty can possibly be permanent, or any established Government subsist in security. In the attainment of this object, so indispensable

to the welfare of Europe, the speech of His Majesty affords us the utmost gratification, the greatest possible encouragement; by recalling to our minds the signal and unexampled successes, that, with a rapidity hitherto unexampled in Europe, have attended the exertions of His Majesty's arms, in whatever quarter they have been called into action, and have so materially and essentially raised and improved the political state of the country, since the last session of Parliament.

Since that period, a progressive and uninterrupted chain of successes have distinguished the arms of His Majesty, have excited the admiration of Europe, and infused additional ardour and energy into the exertions of our gallant countrymen. In the course of the last campaign, the naval annals of this country have been embellished by achievements the most brilliant and decisive, the most important and the most intrepid (not of the present hour alone, in which the spirit of gallantry and enterprize have been peculiarly prominent and conspicuous), but perhaps the most glorious, the most daring and undaunted naval exploits that have hitherto been recorded in any age, or in any history. The little vestige that remains of maritime power to our confederated enemies, have been blockaded in their separate harbours; and when the elements have enabled them to elude our vigilance, and to skulk forth on the ocean, certain annihilation has been the consequence of their temerity and presumption.

But it is not that element alone on which our fleets have ever been invincible, that bears testimony to the exertions and successes of His Majesty's arms. The spirit of disaffection and anarchy, in the sister kingdom, artfully fomented by foreign emissaries, and inflamed by domestic incendiaries, but for the vigilance and attention of His Majesty's Government would have effected a dismemberment of the British empire, have broken every tie of amity and allegiance between Ireland and this country, and have erected on their ruins a Jacobin Republic, under the auspices and protection of our inveterate enemies—pillage and murder, proscription and massacre, were the leading features of the rebellion that assimilated it to its parent, and sufficiently proclaimed the stock from whence it sprung. These atrocious designs have either been curbed and repressed by the assiduity of His Majesty's Government, or frustrated by the able and successful dispositions of our military commanders, aided and supported by the gallantry of our brave soldiers, who have cheerfully and spontaneously extended the limits of their services, for the laudable and patriotic purpose of securing to their fellow citizens the blessings of rational freedom and social order.

Important as these successes are, to the immediate prosperity of the country, to the security and extension of her commerce and the protection of her territory, in their probable effects on the state of Europe, the advantages we may expect from them are incalculable. The powers of the Continent, who from policy, from timidity, or compulsion, have been detached from the common cause, and have either joined in actual hostility to this country, or been awed by the successes of the enemy, into professions of neutrality, must have learnt by this time, by the experience of their conduct to Holland, to Switzerland, and to America, justly to appreciate the blessings of Jacobin fraternization, the solidity of Jacobin professions, and the security and sincerity of Jacobin faith; they must have learnt, that to an enemy regardless of every moral and every political obligation, it is a sufficient source of hostility and aggression, to offer an object to their inordinate ambition, to afford food to indiscriminate, insatiable plunder.

Deserted by the powers in whose immediate cause we embarked in the present contest, this country has stood forward, the sole champion of civilized society; single and alone, her active and intrepid perseverance has opposed an effective bulwark against the outrageous rapacity, and enormous ambition of the enemy; and by their recent humiliation and defeat, we have afforded an opportunity to the principal powers of the Continent to unite in a general confederacy, to check the desperate and dangerous career of an enemy, whose progress they must uniformly have regarded with silent horror, and secret apprehension.

To maintain the proud pre-eminence we acquired, to carry to a conclusion those objects so essential to the welfare of Europe, some sacrifices may be required on our part—but they are sacrifices of which, while we feel the pressure, we cannot but admit the necessity and the demand. The inconveniences we have hitherto sustained, are, by no means, commensurate with the extent of the interests we have at issue; and it must afford infinite satisfaction to every one, to see, that even in the remotest corners of the empire, the public spirit has risen in proportion to the magnitude of the public exigency.

The hopes that have been founded on the failure of our resources, have proved a treacherous fabric, overwhelming our malignant enemy with disgrace and disappointment. Unparalleled as our external successes have been, they derive additional lustre from the increasing splendour of our internal opulence. The measures that have lately been adopted by Government for the support of our finances, aided and assisted by the voluntary exertions of indivi-

duals, have had the most favourable issue, and baffle and set at defiance the vain speculations of our inveterate foe.

The particular measure adverted to, for the redemption of the land tax, my own individual situation, my connection and intercourse with the country, enable me to say, that no measure was ever more generally popular, or was more universally adopted by the landed interest of all descriptions.

Under circumstances so prosperous and encouraging, our fleets and armies triumphant, our revenue flourishing, and public credit daily gaining ground, we have little to apprehend from the efforts of an exhausted enemy; but we must not therefore relax from the exertions, or abate the efforts that have placed this country in the commanding situation she possesses. The ultimate object of the present contest cannot be accomplished, but by a steady perseverance; and in proportion as we look forward with anxiety and impatience to the termination of the war, so in proportion ought our present exertions to be animated, our present efforts redoubled, to reduce to the level of moderation and justice the enormous views and gigantic projects of our ambitious enemy.

From the mutilated and almost annihilated state of the French marine, many years must elapse before they can again become formidable to this country: by vigour, exertion, and perseverance, therefore, at the present moment, we are not only preparing a permanent and substantial treaty for ourselves, but laying the foundation of peace, prosperity and happiness, to a generation yet to come. All Europe looks up to this country—the Old and the New World expect every thing from the vigour and firmness of our Councils. I trust we shall not disappoint their expectations—that we shall unite with one heart and with one hand effectually to check the violence, and to humble the pride of our vain-glorious adversary; and by the vigour, the activity, and unanimity of our exertions, we shall prove that, however individuals may differ in speculative points, His Majesty may repose the utmost confidence in the zeal, the activity, the perseverance, and the determined resolution of his Faithful Commons.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR rose, and spoke to the following effect:—That in general he approved of the proposed address, and concurred in many of the observations that had been made by the noble Lord; and by the honourable Baronet, by whom it had been moved and seconded, and who had supported it with considerable eloquence and ability. But as many transactions had happened since that House had last assembled, which required much explanation, and might demand, perhaps, public inquiry, as there were

some particulars mentioned in His Majesty's speech from the Throne which, he thought, ought not to pass over that night unnoticed ; and, indeed, as there were some points of great public importance which had been overlooked in that speech, to which he wished to call the attention of the House, he would therefore venture to request their patient indulgence for a few moments, whilst he endeavoured to explain what occurred to him regarding the present state of the country.

The first point which naturally called for the attention of every individual in the House, which necessarily formed so prominent a feature in the speech from the Throne, and in the speeches of the honourable Members who had moved and seconded the address, and of which it was impossible to speak in terms of adequate eulogium, was the battle of the Nile, or of Abukir : That it had fallen to his lot, some years ago, to have employed himself in making an extensive inquiry into the circumstances on which the naval strength of this country was founded, and at the same time to examine the particulars of the various brilliant actions which decorated the maritime history of the country. But amongst them all, he did not find one that could stand a comparison with Lord Nelson's victory. The most celebrated, in former times, was the battle of La Hogue ; on which occasion we took, sunk, and destroyed, seventeen sail of the line, of from 54 to 104 guns : but on that occasion, the British fleet was infinitely superior in strength. Whereas, in the battle of the Nile, it is well known that the French fleet was superior in number of men, in the number of its guns, and in weight of metal : that they were anchored in a bay full of shoals, and protected by every contrivance that ingenuity could invent. In such a situation, and with such difficulties to encounter, that nothing but a happy combination of uncommon talents of the profoundest naval skill, of the exactest discipline, and of the most undaunted courage and firmness, could have given us the smallest chance of victory. In short, it places the hero, under whose banners the victory was achieved, and the fleet that had the honour of serving under him, at the summit of naval glory.

But whilst he bestowed every possible degree of praise on the gallant Admiral and his fleet, it was impossible not to remark, that by the misconduct of our Ministers at home, their laurels were almost blasted ; that the orders for the sailing of the fleet were shamefully delayed ; that when it did sail, it was sent up the Mediterranean in divisions, and that the gallant Admiral was under the necessity of wasting the most precious moments in looking for his own ships instead of searching for the enemy. That in consequence of these

unfortunate circumstances, Lord Nelson had not been able to attack the French armament at Malta; in which case both the fleet and the army of Buonaparte must have surrendered. That the British fleet was unaccompanied with frigates, so essential for procuring and transmitting intelligence, which rendered it necessary for Lord Nelson to send home a 50 gun ship with an account of the engagement, by which we lost the *Leander*, the gallant officers and brave men captured in her; and that no bomb vessels having accompanied the fleet, the consequence was, that the transports in the harbour of Alexandria had hitherto escaped destruction; and that had it not been for an accidental circumstance, that the *L'Orient* drew too much water to enter that harbour, the whole French fleet might have been moored there in safety, and might have defied all our efforts. These are points which ought to be thoroughly explained. It is not sufficient that we have gained a splendid victory by the skill and gallantry of our seamen, in spite of ministerial misconduct; we ought to know, why the expedition of Buonaparte was not totally destroyed? Why his army, as well as his fleet, was not captured? and why that hero himself was not brought in chains to this metropolis, which he had formerly proudly threatened he would enter as a conqueror?

The next point that he should take the liberty alluded to, was the subject of Ireland—and here he could not help expressing his regret, that no notice was taken, in the King's speech, of the projected Union between the two kingdoms, which he hoped would have been announced in it, and to which he was a warm well-wisher. He would not dwell upon the subject at present; but he must take the liberty of stating, that the measure, in his opinion, was either rashly undertaken, or timidly postponed, or timorously abandoned.

He should next request the attention of the House to a subject of great public importance, which, to his utter astonishment, was totally overlooked in the speech from the Throne—He alluded to the evacuation of St. Domingo.

It is well known, that if, at the beginning of the war, we had bent all our exertions against the French West-India Islands instead of Flanders, where we wasted our strength so fruitlessly, we might have secured the possession of those islands, and prevented all those scenes of desolation, massacre, and plunder, which have taken place in that unfortunate quarter of the globe. At last we did send some troops there, and succeeded in capturing some of the French possessions, but were not sufficiently strong either to take the whole of St. Domingo, to retain possession of Guadaloupe, or to prevent

some of our own islands from being desolated. But amidst all these unfortunate circumstances, it was some consolation to us, that we could retain possession of a part of St. Domingo, by which we were told, Jamaica was protected from invasion. That source of consolation, however, is now over, as St. Domingo is completely evacuated. This is a subject which might have been mentioned in His Majesty's speech from the Throne, but which, notwithstanding that omission, will at any rate demand very serious inquiry. We ought to know the number of British subjects which have perished in this ill-judged, or ill-conducted enterprise; the amount of the sums of money laid out in attempting to make the acquisition, whether they have been properly expended, and regularly accounted for; the particular causes which induced His Majesty's Ministers to order the posts in question to be abandoned; and lastly, whether care has been taken to preserve, to the best of our power, the engagements we came under, to the French settlers, who placed themselves under our protection.

Without dwelling much on other points, for instance, the capture of two valuable East Indiamen, which had never been properly accounted for, he could not help expressing his regret that he found no notice taken, in the speech from the Throne, of any treaty of alliance having been formed with the United States of America, which he so fully expected. That our naval victories, and the prospect of establishing an eternal friendship with our brethren in America, (for in that light he should ever consider them,) were the only two circumstances, connected with the present war, that he could possibly contemplate with any degree of satisfaction.

That he should now proceed to make some observations on the internal state of the country. That he rejoiced to hear that the revenue continued in so flourishing a situation. That he must take the liberty of troubling the House, however, with some observations, both on those financial projects which had been sanctioned last year, and those which were now in contemplation; and which had been referred to a new branch of the Legislature before unheard of in this part of the island, namely, a body of men who sat in the Mansion-house of the city of London, and seemed to assume powers similar to those which the Lords of the Articles possessed according to the Constitution of Scotland, namely, that of digesting and approving of public measures, previous to their being brought under the consideration of Parliament; that he deeply lamented having witnessed the introduction of such a system here; that it was a public acknowledgment of the weakness and incapacity of Government; that it degraded the dignity of the

House, and sufficiently proved the opinion of Ministers, (which he hoped was ill founded,) that the public had no confidence in, or respect for, the deliberations of Parliament.

In regard to the financial measures of the last session, he was very glad to find that the assessed-tax bill was to be repealed: but the principle of that bill, it seems, was to be enforced in another shape, namely, by a general tax upon income. Without dwelling upon the many new and *very delicate questions* which such an attempt must give rise to, he must take the liberty of remarking, that it is not worth while to oppress every individual in the country for the sake of any sum that may be thus obtained, and at a period too when money, to any amount, may be raised by loan. That he would recommend to the House to adhere to the funding system, and never to abandon it until it had abandoned us. That the wit of man had never invented a measure so complete and unexceptionable as that of raising money for defraying the extraordinary expences of a state, by loans from those who had the circulating wealth of the country in their possession, and of imposing taxes to pay the interest, and to repay the principal. That such a plan might be carried on for years in this country, without the smallest risk of interruption. That he regretted the House should listen to new schemes of finance, attended with untried difficulties, accompanied with much individual oppression, and likely to occasion much public discontent; and above all, the effects of which, on the established taxes of the country, it was impossible to foresee, whilst at the same time it had a mine of wealth at its command, through the medium of the funding system, which might be resorted to without difficulty or danger.

Another point which he would take the liberty of alluding to, had been much dwelt upon by the honourable Baronet who seconded the motion, namely, the land-tax redemption bill. That he should not enter much into that subject at present, for there probably would soon be another opportunity of discussing it, as the act, if it is not to be totally repealed, must, at least, be explained and amended early in the course of the session. That he regretted much to hear, from such respectable authority as the honourable Baronet (Sir H. Mildmay,) that the land-tax bill was likely to be successful in the wide circle of his connexions: that the more it succeeded, it was so much the worse for the country, because every shilling ought to be grudged that was extracted out of the pockets of the landed interest for such an idle speculation, since the superfluous wealth might be so much better expended on the improvement of their estates. But that though he could not approve of

the land-tax redemption bill, yet he rejoiced to hear that another plan was in agitation of a similar nature for the purchase and redemption of tithes. That there could not be a wiser step taken in the whole range of politics. That he trusted, therefore, the public, in this respect was not misinformed. The agricultural improvement of the country, the religious disposition of the people, their respect for the characters of their pastors, and, indeed, the general peace and safety of the kingdom, in a great degree, depended on the success of that measure; and if the same plan were extended to Ireland, the advantages would be almost incalculable.

That he could not sit down without taking some notice of the re-appearance of a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), who had been, like other great men, for some time past, a seceder from his duty in Parliament. That he hoped he had come down that day with a fixed resolution to make an apology to the House for the intemperance of his conduct when he last sat there—an apology which, in his opinion, was essentially necessary—[A loud cry of “Order! “Order!—Chair! Chair!]

Mr. SPEAKER said, If there had been any thing improper in the language which had been alluded to, it was the duty of the honourable Baronet to have noticed it at the time it was spoken. It was one established rule of the House, that when to a speech which any Member might deem worthy of animadversion and censure, another speech succeeded, before such animadversion and censure was moved, it was irregular to move it. Another established rule of the House in aid of the former was, that it was irregular to make a speech spoken on a former day, the subject of debate upon a future one. Upon these grounds the language used by the honourable Baronet was disorderly.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR then added, that he should not press that subject any farther, contrary to the opinion of the Chair. That on the whole he had stated what had occurred to him, on a variety of public questions, from the full conviction, that this was a day peculiarly appropriated to general discussion, and that he should be very glad to hear the various points he had alluded to in his speech properly explained, and answered by His Majesty's Ministers, if they could justify themselves from the various charges which he had found it his duty to urge against them.

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT said, he had never heard any thing with more astonishment than the Speech that day delivered from the Throne. He should make a few observations upon the speech with the freedom becoming a Member of that House. He should endeavour in the remarks he was about to make to follow the order

observed in the speech, and in the speech of the noble Lord who moved the Address. The noble Lord begins with bestowing much praise, and in that he heartily concurred, upon our navy for their gallant achievements; but whether these successes would or would not turn out for future advantage to the country, must solely depend upon the wisdom, or the want of wisdom, in His Majesty's councils. The country, no doubt, stood upon higher ground than it did a short time back; and if advantage was taken of this favourable situation, in conjunction with the rest of Europe, to restore to it tranquillity, and to procure a safe and honourable peace, then, indeed, he should hail our recent successes as the happy omens of future happiness: but if, as the whole tenour of the speech this day from the Throne gave too much reason to fear, our recent successes were only to be made use of as an instrument to instigate the country to a prosecution of the war without any distinct and definite object being declared, he could then only regard our naval victories as the probable forerunners of future misfortunes. Now that we were about to take a new lease, as it were, of the war, he should be glad to be at length distinctly told by the Ministers the real object we were to agree to expend the blood and treasure of the country to obtain. It was in vain to look for any such information in the speech or the address—a studied ambiguity of language reigned throughout the whole; and we were called upon for new exertions to procure not peace, but the general deliverance of Europe. Could any distinct idea be annexed to these words? Did Ministers mean that Belgium was to be restored to the Emperor? that Holland was to be retaken from France? that the French were to be driven out of Italy and Switzerland? or were the old delusions returning to the imaginations of Ministers, flushed with recent success, and were they about to attempt to restore Monarchy to France, and the Emigrants to their estates? Were all these, or any of them, the objects for which the war was now to be continued? He must rest contented, he supposed, without any information upon these topics. He should now consider the probability of any impression being made upon France by force of arms by this country and her allies; it was one of the remarkable features of the speech that not a word was said about what we were accustomed to hear so much formerly. He meant our magnanimous ally, the Emperor of Germany, and our faithful, firm and good ally, the King of Prussia; but the loss of these allies was supplied by the magnanimous wisdom of the Emperor of Russia, and the vigour and decision of the Ottoman Porte. But we were told there was a spirit about to manifest itself throughout all Europe against France. The history of all coalitions

tions, formed of great and discordant interests, was the same ; if they were not successful in their first efforts, they rarely or never succeeded at all. Did any man think it probable that successful war should be carried on against France by a coalition of the present mutilated powers of Europe, when she has already baffled the most powerful league that was ever formed against any country ? when, notwithstanding her untoward circumstances, civil war raging in the interior, and upon her frontier the best armies in Europe ; when she had to resist the combined powers of England, Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, Naples, Spain, Holland, and Portugal, their resources unbroken, their arms untarnished by defeat, was it possible to believe that she should now, with all her conquests and accumulated strength, be unable to resist the new league thought to be forming against her ? And although internal dissensions should arise, we knew by experience how little influence internal disturbances had upon her armies and her external politics. But our foreign politics, although more important than at any former period, from the critical situation of every country in Europe, were almost unimportant in comparison with the policy of Government at home. The next subject which came under consideration was the situation of Ireland. This was a subject of too much importance to be casually discussed, and demanded our whole undivided attention. He should not now, therefore, enter upon it ; but could not forbear remarking that it would have been more decent, at least, to have represented His Majesty as deeply regretting the sufferings of the Irish people, and the severities, from whatever cause proceeding, which had been exercised in that unhappy country. He now came to the last and concluding part of His Majesty's speech.

In the last sentence, and in that alone, he did most completely agree that we should all be firmly determined to repel any attack upon our laws and Constitution. Had we firmly repelled the many attacks made by the present Ministers upon our laws and Constitution, he should not now have to complain of many and weighty grievances on the part of the people of England ; he should not now have to complain of innovations made in the jurisprudence of the country ; he should not now have to complain of an infamy guarded against by the laws and Constitution, the interference of the Executive with the management of prisons and treatment of prisoners ; he should not now have to complain of every barrier being broken erected for the freedom of the people ; he should not now have to complain of those Bastiles, called Houses of Correction, where severities were exercised upon men not charged even with any crime, such as the humane old law of the land does not allow to

be inflicted even upon the greatest criminals. He should not now have to complain of men being thrown into prison upon suspicion of crime, and after months of solitary confinement, turned naked into the world, their fortunes ruined, their health destroyed, their wives and families starving, or depending upon charity for a precarious subsistence, and this was the conduct of a Government we were called upon not barely to submit to, but with zeal and affection to support. He cannot fall down with vile prostrations before His Majesty's Throne, and, like a trembling slave, lick the dust from off his feet. If His Majesty was sincere in wishing to promote that unanimity amongst all ranks of his people, so desirable at all times, so peculiarly necessary at the present time, let the People be restored to their rights and liberties—let the old law of the land be again made the rule of action—let these new prisons, these receptacles of misery and instruments of tyranny, be destroyed—let a wise system of economy succeed to the present profligate waste of corrupt expenditure; and let these blessings of liberty be secured by a full, free, and fair representation of the People in Parliament: it was to such a Government that he would give his firm and faithful support; but, at a time like the present, when the Ministers, disdaining any longer to preserve appearances, had thrown off the mask, and shewn, that not content with destroying the substance, they would not permit even the shadow of liberty to exist; when, after daily encroachments, they had at length set all control at defiance, and so wantonly, he would not say made attacks upon, but, given the final blow to the constitution; at such a time, and under such circumstances, to call upon free men for unconditional support, was only adding mockery to insult, and injury to oppression.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he did not rise to detain the House a moment from the vote; he rose merely to give notice, that on Monday se'nnight he should bring forward a very important proposition on finance.

The question was then put, and carried.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS gave notice, that to-morrow he should move the thanks of the House to Lord Nelson, the Captains, &c. for the late glorious victory.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, November 21.

Earl SPENCER rose, pursuant to the notice of yesterday, to move the thanks of the House to Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, for the complete and splendid victory obtained by his Lordship over the French fleet off the mouth of the Nile. In it, his Lordship observed, skill, courage, discipline, every thing that constitutes real glory, were found combined. No casual circumstance, no fortunate occurrence, by contributing to the event, diminished its splendour. The most consummate bravery, unaided by the most consummate address, could not have achieved it; but favoured by both, the gallant Admiral had triumphed over difficulties, which, without the experience of his success, would have been deemed insurmountable, and thereby proved to the world that no superiority of strength, or advantage of situation, could enable an enemy to cope with a British fleet. It was not, however, the unparalleled brilliancy of the action alone which claimed the notice of the House. In every point of view, under whatever circumstances considered, as a great and glorious achievement, it must call forth universal admiration; but in relation to its effects, it would be found essentially connected with our dearest interests. The political consequences which had already resulted from it, were of the most important nature; and the change it was likely to produce in the affairs of Europe rendered it the most momentous and universal in its influence ever achieved. It had invigorated the feeble, confirmed the wavering, and consolidated the powers of Europe into one body, actuated with one soul, and ready to resist the gigantic efforts of our inveterate foe. His Lordship having expatiated at full length on these several topics, both in relation to the intrinsic merit of the achievement, and also its probable consequences in a political view, moved,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to Rear-Admiral
“ Lord Nelson, for his able and gallant conduct in the memorable
“ and decisive victory gained over a superior fleet of the enemy,
“ near the mouth of the Nile, on the first, second, and third of
“ August last.”

Viscount HOOD expressed his satisfaction at the opportunity afforded of offering his tribute of applause to the conduct of the noble and gallant Lord, in the engagement which was the subject

of the present motion. Accustomed as he was to hear and admire great and splendid examples of naval prowess ; dazzled as he and all who heard him must be with the accounts of victories, vying with each other in splendour and glory, and rising in proud superiority above the most distinguished of former times, yet he would not hesitate to say, that the victory in question, under all its circumstances, stood in high pre-eminence, not only unparalleled in the annals of history, but incapable of being excelled by any efforts of address or bravery. This, the characteristic modesty of the noble Lord made it the more incumbent on public justice to acknowledge ; but, while he subscribed in the most unqualified sense to the brilliancy of the action, there was another which he could not pass by without notice. The recent victory obtained by Sir John Borlase Warren, though inferior in magnitude, deeply affected our dearest interests, and was attended with the happiest political consequences, though not on so large a scale. The one affected us in our internal capacity, as an empire ; the other, acting in a wider sphere, embraced also our relations with foreign powers. The one confirmed and secured our domestic peace and safety ; the other enabled us to procure these blessings for all Europe. In this view of the subject, much praise was certainly due to the gallant officer who defeated the enemy's squadron off the coast of Ireland. It was a victory productive of the most immediate and beneficial consequences, and, as such, entitled to our gratitude and thanks.

Lord MINTO bore testimony, in the highest terms of applause, to the character and conduct of the noble Admiral. Whether considered as a man or an officer, he did not know which most to admire, or by whom he could be excelled. The modesty of his account shewed the virtue of his heart, and the splendor of his victory the vigour of his mind. But it was not only in the instance in question he had distinguished himself, but on every occasion when opportunity presented itself in the course of the war. After dwelling for some time on these, and particularly on the last important action, his Lordship took a view of the beneficial consequences to be expected from it, the extent of which, he said, was incalculable. But it was not in naval operations alone that Lord Nelson had manifested superior talents. He knew, for he spoke from experience, that the universal and commanding genius of his Lordship not only enabled him to excel in his profession, but qualified him for the management of political emergencies, on some of which he had conducted himself with great wisdom and address. Impressed, therefore, as he felt himself, with a lively sense of his Lordship's merit, he most cheerfully concurred in the vote of thanks.

H. R. H. the Duke of CLARENCE, after pronouncing an eulogium on the character of Lord Nelson as a naval officer, adverted to the engagement off the Nile, and dwelt at large upon the courage and address for which he stood so pre-eminently distinguished. His Royal Highness, whenever he alluded to him, called him his noble friend. He expatiated on the great political consequences that have, and must necessarily result from the victory; from which he passed on to the defeat of the French squadron on the coast of Ireland; a victory which, though he admitted to be inferior in brilliancy, was also productive of the happiest effects.

The question was then put, and carried unanimously.

Earl SPENCER then moved resolutions thanking Lord Nelson and his fleet, and Sir J. B. Warren and his fleet, which were agreed to *nem. dis.*

His Majesty having appointed this day at two o'clock to receive the Address of the House of Peers, their Lordships proceeded to Saint James's with the following humble Address of the right honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled:

" Most gracious Sovereign,

" We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to approach your Majesty with our humble thanks for your Majesty's most gracious speech from the Throne.

" We beg leave to offer to your Majesty our heartfelt congratulations on the glorious and decisive victory obtained by your Majesty's fleet under the command of Rear Admiral Lord Nelson over an enemy superior in force, and in the advantage of situation; an achievement which has even added fresh splendor to the unexampled series of your Majesty's naval triumphs. While this memorable success has, in the first instance, turned to the confusion of the enemy, an enterprize not more distinguished by its injustice, perfidy, and extravagance, than by the inveterate hostility of its authors against every British interest, we entertain a just hope, that the blow now given to the power and influence of the enemy will be decisive in its effects; that the opening thus afforded will be improved by other powers, to the maintenance of their own independence and security; and that the wise and dignified example of the Emperor of Russia, and of the Ottoman Porte, will be followed by such effectual and

united exertions, as are alone suited to the present crisis, and as are best calculated to produce the general deliverance of Europe.

“ Permit us to assure your Majesty, that, while we feel our hearts and hopes thus elated by the brilliant success which has crowned your Majesty’s arms abroad, we congratulate your Majesty no less sincerely on the uninterrupted state of security in which this kingdom has been preserved against the vain threats of the enemy, by the extent of your Majesty’s military preparations ; and still more by the zeal and spirit which animate all ranks of your Majesty’s subjects in the cause of their country.

“ Nor have we seen with less satisfaction the entire disappointment of the attempts of our enemies against your Majesty’s kingdom of Ireland, the defeat and surrender of the force which they had disembarked for the support of a rebellion instigated by themselves, and the capture or dispersion of the armaments destined for the same object ; and we trust that the rebellion, thus cut off from foreign assistance, and curbed and repressed, as it has been, by the vigour of your Majesty’s Councils, and the gallantry of your Majesty’s troops, will, ere long, be finally extinguished.

“ We are anxious to declare to your Majesty, and to the World, our abhorrence of the views and principles of those who, in concert with our inveterate enemy, had planned the subversion of the constitution of their country ; and we cannot but feel persuaded, that the compleat exposure of these treasons must awaken the deluded to a sense of their duty, and must impress still more strongly on the minds of all your Majesty’s subjects, the necessity of supporting, against every attack, the laws and government of their country.

“ Convinced of the extent and value of the blessings which, under your Majesty’s happy and paternal government, we have to defend, and confident in the resources and spirit of our country, we have encountered with cheerfulness many and great difficulties. These, by the blessing of Providence on your Majesty’s dignified firmness and perseverance in a just cause, have happily been surmounted. Animated by this success, encouraged by the comparative situation of our country, and, above all, deeply impressed with a sense of that duty which is incumbent on every individual in a period of such general danger and calamity, we will not relax our exertions, but will, to the utmost of our power, support your Majesty in every measure which may best contribute to deliver unimpaired to posterity, the security, independance, happiness, and honour of the British empire.”

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HIS MAJESTY's most Gracious ANSWER.

" My Lords,

" *I receive with the highest satisfaction this dutiful and loyal address.*

" *Your congratulations on the brilliant successes with which it has pleased Providence to reward our exertions, are particularly agreeable to me; and I trust that the honourable and dignified perseverance of my Parliament and my People will, both by example and effect, materially contribute to restore the independance of Europe, and to ensure to these kingdoms the blessings of secure and honourable peace.*"

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, November 21.

Lord GRANVILLE LEVISON GOWER brought up the report of the address to His Majesty.

After it had been read a first time,

Mr. JONES said, that he had already asserted it in this House, he would assert it again, and he wished it to be impressed upon the minds of all men, that every drop of blood that was shed, and every shilling that was spent now, was attributable to the ferocious and sanguinary ambition of the five directorial despots of France. When Ministers proposed proper measures, which did not bear harder upon one class of men than another, they should have his support. He meant not to detain the House long, for the address had his most cordial assent. He hoped, however, that Ministers would adopt a rigid system of economy; for without it, all our victories, however brilliant and decisive, would avail but little. He believed, however, there was not one man among them who would have the hardihood to say, that such a system had been adopted hitherto.

The address was read a second time, agreed to, and ordered to be presented to His Majesty by the whole House.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS rose in pursuance of the notice he had given yesterday, to move the thanks of the House to Rear Admiral Lord Nelson for his decisive victory over the French fleet. There were some propositions, Mr. Dundas said, which were so

forcible, that they rather suffered than gained by any attempt to impress them upon the minds of men. Many victories had been marked by peculiar circumstances. Some victories had been marked by the skill of the commanders; some by the particular bravery of the seamen; others by the great and extensive benefits resulting from them. But it was peculiar to this victory, that it united all those qualities by which other victories had been most distinguished. The truth of this was so universally felt, that it would be unnecessary for him to enlarge upon it. The skill of Admiral Lord Nelson had been universally admitted. The undaunted courage of the officers and seamen, in attacking a superior fleet under such advantage of situation as to be deemed almost impregnable, was the theme of general gratitude and applause. But when we looked to the extent of the consequences of the victory both abroad and at home; when we beheld the spirit with which it had electrified Europe from one end to the other, we must acknowledge that there never did exist a victory which had produced so much at present, and which was likely to produce so many and such important consequences in future. He would say no more, but move,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, Knight of the most honourable order of the Bath, for his able and gallant conduct in the memorable and decisive victory obtained over the *French* fleet, near the mouth of the *Nile*, on the first, second, and third of *August* last.”

Mr. TIERNEY hoped the right honourable gentleman would excuse the eagerness of his intrusion; and the House, he trusted, would not consider it as presumption on his part, but do him the justice to believe that it gave him greater pleasure to support any measure that might be brought forward, when he could consistently with his sense of duty, than to oppose it. Certainly, if a division had taken place last night, he could not, on account of certain passages, have acceded to the address. But to-day he had heartfelt satisfaction in giving the present motion his most cordial and zealous support. No man was more anxious than he was for the general security of the empire; no man felt more warmth and animation than he did, whenever our navy was triumphant. If such were his feelings, what must be the zeal and gratitude with which he rose to thank the gallant Admiral for his services. Whatever difference of opinion there might be with respect to the general management of the navy, not meaning in the smallest degree to insinuate any thing against the management of the navy in this instance; whatever difference of opinion there might be upon that subject; of this at least he felt proud, that whenever an opportunity

was offered to our gallant seamen to meet the enemy, they had uniformly proved triumphant. The consequences of this victory he felt perhaps as much as any man; perhaps he saw them in a point of view which must be damped by the use made of them. But that was not the question in the present case.—It was only to the services of Admiral Nelson that the attention of the House was now directed. He trusted, however, that Ministers would not stop here, and that other services would receive the thanks of the House. No man estimated more highly than he did the value of our possessions in the East, and he heartily hoped that the effect of the victory might be to defeat any designs that might be meditated against them. Those who supported the address had spoken in a tone of confidence upon the subject, and God grant that they might not be disappointed. But knowing as he did, that there was a great army still on foot, he could not, though he hoped it might be defeated, be considered as too desponding when he confessed that he was not quite so confident as others. But another branch of the empire came more nearly to our feelings—He meant the victory of Sir J. B. Warren on the coast of Ireland.—[A cry of Hear! Hear!]

He was happy to find that his observation had been received in such a manner, and he hoped it would be followed up. Nothing, in his idea, could exceed the importance of Sir John Warren's victory. It had set all men's minds at ease as to the security of the empire:—and again, he begged leave to say, that whatever difference of opinion there might be upon many subjects, there were some upon which it was impossible to differ—this was one. We might thank Sir John Warren for being able to discuss the affairs and situation of Ireland, without any foreign interference. Foreign interference was always to be deprecated. But when we considered what would have been the nature of a French interference, we could not but feel the utmost gratitude to the gallant officer who had rendered the designs of the enemy abortive. He hoped the House would give him credit for his motives;—he knew that the brilliancy of the one victory was greater than that of the other; and if by any means a line could be drawn in such a manner as not to wound the feelings of either of the brave officers, he should be glad. He concluded by expressing his entire approbation of the motion.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that there was some confusion in the House when he gave his notice last night, or the honourable gentleman might have heard, that he distinctly said it was his intention to move the thanks of the House for services performed on the coast of Ireland, as well as in the Mediterranean.

Mr. TIERNEY begged the right honourable gentleman's pardon; he certainly had not heard what he said last night.

Mr. HOBHOUSE declared, that it was impossible for him to give a silent vote upon the subject. He agreed entirely in the eulogy that had been pronounced upon the gallant Admiral. But he could have wished that the right honourable gentleman, in enumerating his qualities, had added to them the Admiral's modesty and piety. His modesty had been distinctly shewn in that part of his letter where he had said that his ship had fought so gallantly after he was wounded, that the service did not suffer by his wound! His piety had been evinced in the beginning of his letter, in which he ascribed the victory to Divine Providence. To Earl St. Vincent and Lord Duncan a pecuniary recompence had been given: perhaps a recompence of the same sort was intended for Admiral Nelson; for his Majesty, he was sure, must be perfectly ready to bestow rewards upon him. With respect to the title with which he had been honoured, he supposed a higher one would have been given, but that the Admiral was inferior in naval rank to Earl St. Vincent and Lord Duncan, and commanded only a detachment of a fleet.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said that the honourable gentleman had only suggested what had been already determined upon. And though the honourable member's observations were perhaps irregular, yet as the subject had been mentioned, he informed the House that he should probably have it in command to bring down a message to-morrow, for bestowing such marks of farther favour upon Admiral Nelson as the House might think fit.

The motion was passed *nem. con.*

Mr. Secretary DNUDAS then moved.

“ That the Thanks of this House be given to the several Captains and Officers of the Fleet under the command of Rear-Admiral Lord *Nelson*, on the 1st, 2d, and 3d of *August* last, who by their bravery and good conduct contributed to the glorious success of those days: and that Rear-Admiral Lord *Nelson* do signify the same to them.”

“ That this House doth highly approve of and acknowledge the services of the Seamen and Marines on board the ships under the command of Rear Admiral Lord *Nelson* in the late glorious victory over the *French* Fleet near the mouth of the Nile, and that the Officers commanding the several ships do signify the same to their respective Crews, and do thank them for their good behaviour.”

The motions were passed *nem. con.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that another duty remained to be performed, and that it was necessary for the House to mark their veneration for those who had fallen in the service of their country. One gallant Captain, who had greatly signalized himself in the action of the first of August, had fallen—he meant Captain Westcott. He should therefore move,

“ That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, humbly desiring His Majesty will be pleased to give directions that a Monument be erected in the Cathedral Church of *St. Paul, London*, to the memory of Captain *George Blagdon Westcott*, of His Majesty's ship *Majestic*, who fell gloriously in the naval engagement on the first of *August*, when a decisive victory was obtained by Rear Admiral Lord *Nelson* over the *French Fleet*, off the mouth of the *Nile*, and that this House will make good the expences attending the same.”

Agreed to *nem. con.*

Mr. KEENE said, that Captain Westcott's family, who depended upon him for support, must be reduced to much distress by his loss. That gallant Captain had given great part of his property, which he had procured during the war, to his father, to relieve him from embarrassments. The death of such a man must be a severe loss to his family; and he trusted that something would be done for them.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said he was perfectly ready to admit that the transactions to which he was about to refer were not attended with all those striking circumstances which accompanied the victory of Admiral Nelson. He admitted, that Sir John B. Warren's fleet was superior to that of the enemy; he admitted that the enemy had not made such a manly resistance on the coast of Ireland as they had done in the Mediterranean; but he felt that he should not discharge his duty, if he did not call the attention of the House to the services that had been performed on the coast of Ireland. For many years past, from the commencement of the war, the country had been indebted to the exertions of Sir John B. Warren. He might by some be called fortunate; but never should this derogate with him from any man's merit; for he always found those to be most fortunate, who put themselves most in fortune's way. The conduct of Sir John B. Warren was distinguished by exertion, by activity, by a meritorious love of his country; but what he wished to direct the attention of the House to, was to the victory on the coast of Ireland—a victory which had relieved the public mind, been productive of the most beneficial consequences, and though not so brilliant a one as some others, yet it was a victory

highly worthy of the gratitude and thanks of the House. He therefore moved,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to Sir *John Borlase Warren*, Bart. and Knight of the most honourable order of the Bath, for his meritorious and successful exertions on the 12th of *October* last, in the total defeat of a *French Armament*, destined for the Invasion of the Kingdom of *Ireland*.”

The motion was agreed to *nem. con.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS then said, that his motion of thanks to the Captains, and other officers and seamen under Sir John Warren would include a longer period than the 12th of *October* last, because some of the French ships had been taken at different periods in that month. He therefore moved,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to the several Captains, and other Officers on board His Majesty's ships which were engaged with a *French* squadron destined for the coast of *Ireland* in the month of *October* last, for their bravery and gallant conduct in the defeat of that armament, and that Sir *John Borlase Warren* do signify the same to them.”

Agreed to *nem. con.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS then moved,

“ That this House doth highly approve of and acknowledge the services of the Seamen and Marines on board the several ships engaged with the *French* squadron, destined to the coast of *Ireland* in the month of *October* last; and that the Officers commanding the several ships do signify the same to their respective crews, and do thank them for their good behaviour.”

Agreed to *nem. con.*

Thursday, November 22.

Lord CHARLES SOMERSET reported to the House, that His Majesty would be ready to receive the address at half past three o'clock at his Palace of St. James.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought a message signed by His Majesty, viz.

GEORGE R.

“ His Majesty having taken into his royal consideration the signal and glorious service performed by Rear Admiral Lord Nelson in the memorable and decisive victory obtained over a superior French fleet off the mouth of the Nile, in the month of August last, not only in the highest degree honourable to himself, but eminently beneficial to His Majesty's

kingdoms; and being desirous to bestow upon the said Rear Admiral Lord Nelson some considerable and lasting mark of his royal favour as a testimony of His Majesty's approbation of such distinguished service, and for this purpose to give and grant to the said Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, and the two next successors, heirs male of the body of the said Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, the title of Baron Nelson of the Nile, and Burnham Thorpe in the county of Norfolk, shall descend, for and during their lives, a net annuity of 2000*l.* per annum. But His Majesty not having it in his power to grant an annuity to that amount, or to extend the effect of the said grant beyond the term of his own life, recommends it to his faithful Commons to consider of a proper method of enabling His Majesty to grant the same, and of extending, securing, and settling such annuity to the said Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, and the two next persons on whom the title of Baron Nelson of the Nile, and of Burnham Thorpe in the county of Norfolk, shall descend, in such manner as shall be most effectual for the benefit of the said Rear Admiral Lord Nelson and his family.

“ G. R.”

On the motion of Mr. Chancellor PITT, the message was referred to a Committee of Supply for to-morrow.

Friday, November 23.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that His Majesty had been waited on with the following address of thanks for his most gracious speech from the Throne :

“ Most gracious Sovereign,

“ We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to return your Majesty the thanks of this House for your most gracious speech from the Throne ; and to congratulate your Majesty on the signal success which, by the blessing of Providence, has attended your Majesty's arms, particularly on the memorable and decisive action in which a detachment of your Majesty's fleet, under the command of Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, attacked, and almost totally destroyed, a superior force of the enemy, strengthened by every advantage of situation.

“ It is with just pride and exultation that we observe, that, by this great and brilliant victory, an enterprize, of which the injustice, perfidy, and extravagance, had fixed the attention of the world,

and which was peculiarly directed against some of the most valuable interests of the British empire, has, in the first instance, been turned to the confusion of its authors ; and we entertain an earnest hope, that the blow thus given to the power and influence of France, the laudable example held out by the Emperor of Russia and the Ottoman Porte, and the disposition manifested in the different countries struggling under the yoke of France, may encourage other powers to adopt that vigorous line of conduct which experience has shewn to be alone consistent with the security and honour of independant states, and which, if generally adopted, may lead to the deliverance of Europe.

“ We are fully sensible of the peculiar advantages derived to this kingdom from the extent of our preparations at home, and from the general demonstrations of zeal and spirit among all ranks of your Majesty’s subjects ; and we have seen, with the greatest satisfaction, the effect of the measures adopted in Ireland for repressing a rebellion instigated by our inveterate enemy ; the surrender of the French troops landed for its support ; and the successful vigilance and activity of your Majesty’s squadrons in capturing or dispersing the armaments since destined for the same purpose.

“ We are anxious to testify to your Majesty the abhorrence and indignation with which we have observed the desperate principles and practices of those who have long planned the subversion of our Constitution, which have now been fully detected and made manifest to the world ; and we cannot but express our firm persuasion, that those who had been misled or seduced must now be awakened to their duty, and that a just sense of the miseries and horrors which those traitorous designs have produced must impress on the minds of all your Majesty’s faithful subjects the necessity of continuing to repel with firmness every attack on the laws and established Government of their Country.

“ We shall not fail diligently to apply ourselves to the consideration of such measures as may provide the necessary supplies with as little inconvenience to your people, and as little addition to the permanent burdens of the State, as the circumstances will admit ; and, under the unavoidable pressure of protracted war, while we join with your Majesty in regretting the indispensable necessity of heavy expences, we shall derive the greatest satisfaction and confidence from the productive state of the revenue, the maintenance and improvement of public credit, and the extent and prosperity of the commerce and industry of your Majesty’s subjects ; and that we shall eagerly avail ourselves of every opportunity to cultivate and improve advantages so important to the public safety and welfare.

" We embrace with satisfaction the opportunity of thus renewing to your Majesty the solemn assurances of our firm and unalterable determination to persevere in those exertions which may enable your Majesty to conduct the great contest in which we are engaged to a safe and honourable conclusion. Animated alike by a sense of the difficulties we have surmounted, and of the distinguished success which has rewarded our perseverance in a just cause, we shall uniformly maintain those principles, an adherence to which, in a period of general danger and calamity, has procured to us the advantages of our present situation, and will, we trust, under every vicissitude, continue to prove that the security and happiness of the British nation find the surest support (under the blessings of Providence) in its own constancy, its energy, and its virtue."

HIS MAJESTY'S most gracious ANSWER.

" Gentlemen,

" I return you my particular thanks for this loyal and dutiful address; and receive, with the greatest satisfaction, your congratulations on the late glorious events, and the declaration of your firm adherence to those wise and honourable principles which have uniformly guided your conduct. The perseverance and firmness of Parliament, and the zeal and spirit of my people, will give additional weight to my exertions in endeavouring to improve the advantages which this country and Europe have every reason to expect from the happy consequences of the success of my arms, and from the present state and disposition of other powers."

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for a Committee of the whole House, to consider of His Majesty's most gracious message respecting an annuity to be granted to Rear Admiral Lord Nelson.

Mr. THOMAS TYRWHITT JONES:—From no man in His Majesty's dominions can come a more humble and sincere acknowledgement of the royal message before us than myself. The victory obtained by Admiral Lord Nelson is above all praise, and no language I am master of can be adequate to it. The consequences are so eventful and eventual, that if rightly followed up (which I am fully disposed to think will be the case) by His Majesty's Ministers, the noble Lord may be hereafter (I think I do not exceed the mark), justly called the Saviour of mankind. As to the armament itself, which is connected nearly with the object of the message, when it lay at Toulon, I often hazarded an opinion that its destination was India, but I could not get three people to

agree with me. This, however, is only my private observation on the expedition; and I shall only say, that I am sorry I was right, and that I hope some of His Majesty's Ministers, and some of the Directors of the East-India Company thought as I did, and took their measures accordingly.

Now, Sir, I shall pass from that long, awful and solemn suspense which the nation laboured under; I shall pass, Sir, with the warmth of an Englishman to the scene of action—that scene of glory to the British arms—that scene of confusion and dismay to the French—that scene of wonder and delight to the unlettered and paralysed Arab—that scene of astonishment to the whole world!—Here, Sir, I will observe on the immediate consequences of this victory as they strike me: from that moment the King of Naples felt easy on his Throne, and ceased to temporise with the Directory. The cold Russian grew warm in the common cause against the common enemy—the proud and stately Porte forgot old animosities—their mutual jealousies subsided, their heart-burnings ceased—they shook hands—the *tocfin* was rung—the warwhoop was sounded through their distant regions with the rapidity of lightning and the tone of thunder—and thousands of armed men rushed forth, panting to crush an expedition engendered in horrible, diabolical ambition, concerted and carried on with hypocrisy under the mask of friendship, acted upon with extravagance and wildness of perfidy unexampled in the annals of history—unparalleled since the creation of the world. I know not any word to call the expedition by—and I shall take the liberty to *Anglicize* a word of their own for that purpose;—the only one I think which can nearly reach its nature. Sir, I call it the last, though not least, *monstrosity* of that horrid, unaccountable *unfathomable* Revolution.

Sir, I feel warm on the subject of *that revolution*, and, wishing to say something of it—but, Sir, I will return to the point before us.—Now, Sir, I humbly pray that *the Almighty* may go forth with the combined fleets and armies, and that the prædatory army of Buonaparte (and such I may infer they are, from their General's address) may be cut in pieces, and not one man saved to tell the tale in Paris; that the armament (of transports) may be wholly destroyed, and that there be not *a wreck* left behind.

Sir, I have ever thought and said in this House, that I thought this a just and necessary war—I think it still just and necessary, more than ever—upon that point I agree with His Majesty's Ministers; and I assure them, that when we have disagreed on other points, I have differed from conscience sake. My feelings are very warm on the subject before us—and I have gone to a greater length

than I intended ; and I thank the House for permitting me to indulge those feelings thus far. And, Sir, I now vote most cordially for your leaving the chair.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee, Captain Berkeley in the chair ; and His Majesty's message having been read,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he was so persuaded of the unanimous sentiment and wish of the House on the motion he should have the honour to make, that he should consider it impertinent in him to detain them farther on the subject ; he would therefore move, " That it is the opinion of this Committee, that an annuity of 2000*l.* per annum be payable out of the consolidated fund, to Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, and to his two next heirs inheriting the title, in consideration of his eminent services, pursuant to His Majesty's message."

Honourable GEORGE WALPOLE rose to second the motion. He said the country would doubtless think with him, that Lord Nelson had most justly deserved this remuneration for his services ; at the same time he did not see why the circumstance of his commanding a detachment of the fleet only, was a sufficient reason for withholding from him those still ample honours which His Majesty might otherwise have conferred upon him ; it was, in fact, saying, that not the merit alone, but the rank of the person, was to appportion the degree of honour to be conferred.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that on a subject of this nature he was unwilling to enter into any matter that might seem like a difference of sentiment. There could be but one opinion as to the transcendent merits of Lord Nelson ; and he was sure that the sentiments of posterity respecting him would be, not according to the rank which he held in the peerage, but the deeds he had performed ; and he trusted that, as long as the name of this country endured, the fame of Nelson would be perpetuated ; and that it would not be whether the title of Baron, Viscount, or Earl, was conferred upon him, that would make any difference in the opinion of Europe or posterity. He must also observe, that the bestowment, and degree of rank conferred, was a subject that did not come within the cognizance of that House, but lay entirely in the breast of him who was the fountain of honour.

At the same time, if his opinion was asked on the question abstractly considered, he must differ from the honourable General, if he supposed that the rank which a meritorious officer held in his profession was not to be taken into consideration, when honorary titles were to be bestowed ; he rather considered that the degree of

merit and the degree of rank were to be conjointly considered. He would, however, freely confess that no honours which it was in the power of the Crown to confer, could add any thing to the lustre which Lord Nelson would derive from his own transcendent merits.

The resolution was then put and carried *nem. con.*

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee, to consider of a motion for granting a supply to His Majesty; and His Majesty's gracious speech to Parliament having been referred to the said Committee, Mr. Hobart in the chair,

Mr. Chancellor Pitt moved, that it be the opinion of the Committee, that a supply be granted to His Majesty: the resolution was agreed to, and the House being resumed, the resolution was reported, and ordered to be received to-morrow.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR wished to remind the House, that a subject of considerable importance to the revenue, and the Northern part of the island, had engaged a good deal of their attention during the last Parliament, he meant the Scotch distilleries. The Committee which had been then appointed, had made considerable progress in the business; he therefore apprehended that it could not be brought to a more prosperous conclusion than to refer it to the same Committee. He should therefore wish for the re-appointment of the said Committee.

Mr. Chancellor PITT agreed with the honourable Baronet; and as it was a subject in which the revenue was materially concerned, he meant that it should be brought forward at an early opportunity.

Mr. WILBERFORCE BIRD took notice of the bill which passed last session, for legalizing the issue of country small notes. That was an act professedly of a temporary nature, passed in a time of public distress, and whilst the Bank was shut; as the act had been found salutary, and the restriction on the Bank still continued, he hoped that liberty would be granted for continuing the issuing of notes under 20s. It was of great importance to the public to have an extension of the circulating medium; but he knew not whether the issue of a new silver coinage had been agreed on: if assured that that was likely to take place soon, he should wave his intended motion; but if a new coinage of silver was not allowed, it would prove a very great inconvenience to traders and manufacturers, if notes under 20s. were not allowed in the country.

The act of last session having been read by the clerk, Mr. Bird then moved for leave to bring in a bill to continue and amend the said act.

Mr. Chancellor PITT was glad this motion was not made without some previous notice, as it militated, in some measure, against the established custom of the country. It was true, the restriction on the Bank still continued, but the embarrassment which occasioned that restriction was not now the same, nor was the circulation in the country more embarrassed now than formerly. As, therefore, the country was not now labouring under those temporary pressures which first occasioned the act, the subject of the motion became a consideration of more general policy. As to the silver coinage, if there were a pressing demand, it would, indeed, be a wrong cause for delaying it on account of any proposed alteration of the ornamental part of it, to which the honourable Member had alluded; but a new silver coinage of a different standard was a matter of greater consequence, and required mature deliberation. He trusted, however, that this suspension would not continue much longer, and that when the scheme could be properly matured, it would be found beneficial to the community.

Mr. BIRD stated, it was not his idea that if this act was not renewed, that the country would relapse into the same difficulties as formerly. He then moved that leave be given to bring in a bill to explain and amend the act of last session for permission to issue in the country small notes, of value under 20s. Leave was given, and a bill ordered to be prepared and brought in accordingly.

Saturday, November 24.

The report of the Committee, to whom His Majesty's message respecting Lord Nelson had been referred, was brought up by the honourable Captain Berkeley. It stated it to be the opinion of the Committee, that a clear yearly sum of 2000l. should be granted to His Majesty out of the consolidated fund, from the first of August 1798, to enable His Majesty to settle the same in the most beneficial manner for the use of Admiral Lord Nelson, and the two next succeeding heirs on whom the title shall descend.

Mr. ROSE then moved for an account of the navy and army estimates, &c. when the House adjourned.

Monday, November 26.

Mr. W. DUNDAS, pursuant to notice, moved for leave to bring in a bill to give power to the Bank of Scotland to issue small notes. The clauses which he intended to introduce into this bill would be in some respects different from those of the former bill. He then moved, that the former act be read, which being done, he

moved, that leave be given to bring in a bill to continue the said act for a time to be limited.

Mr. TIERNEY gave notice of a motion, which was, in his opinion, he said, of considerable importance. It was his duty to move it; in doing so he begged to be understood as acting as an individual merely, and not on the suggestion of any other person. He should therefore, without farther preface, say, that on Friday next he should move the House to this effect:—"That it is the duty of His Majesty's Ministers not to enter into any engagements that may prevent or impede any negotiation for peace, whenever there shall appear a disposition on the part of France to accede to terms of peace that may be consistent with the interest and the honour of the British Nation."

After a few words from Mr. Chancellor PITT on the inconvenience of letting the matter stand for that day, on account of some business of finance, which, he trusted, would be ready for the House at that time, the day was altered for this motion for Thursday se'nnight.

The order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of a supply to be granted to His Majesty, being read, the House resolved itself accordingly.

Lord ARDEN moved, that it is the opinion of this Committee, that 120,000 seamen be employed for the sea service, for the year 1799, including 20,000 marines.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR said, that considering the distressed situation of this country in point of finance, and the distressed condition of the enemy's marine force, he could not help thinking that the number of seamen now proposed was much larger than was necessary under all the circumstances; 120,000 seamen! Why, 110,000 had been deemed sufficient at the conclusion of the American war, when the united force of France, Spain, and Holland, was no less than 140 ships of the line. Under these circumstances he could not help considering the proposed vote a great expence and profusion that could be avoided.

Mr. Chancellor PITT spoke nearly as follows:—I shall not, Sir, nor indeed will it be necessary for me to take up much of the time of the Committee. The honourable Baronet objects to the vote of so large a force as 120,000 men; he thinks it would be more advisable for us not to have such a number, but he has assigned no reason for his objection, except that 110,000 men were deemed sufficient, as he calls it, at the end of the American war, when the navies of Spain, Holland, and France, were united against us. Perhaps, Sir, 110,000 men were as much as the country

could then supply ; but by the increase of our commerce since that war, we have carried our maritime strength to that unparalleled extent, to which we are indebted for all the unparalleled advantages and superiority which we now enjoy. Will the honourable Baronet tell me that 110,000 men were sufficient at the period he speaks of, when, instead of blocking up the ports of all your enemies, instead of having every foreign station properly supplied, and your commerce regularly and effectually protected, instead of having every other quarter of the globe the scene of your victories and your triumphs, you had the misfortune of seeing your navy every where inferior in point of number? Will he tell me that 110,000 men were sufficient at that period, when the gallantry and skill of your seamen could only rescue you from great calamities and dangers, instead of conducting you to that unequalled pre-eminence, splendour, and glory, which you now possess? Does he wish the House, from principles of economy, to renounce those advantages, to give up those blessings, in order to throw us back to that scene of difficulty from which we were extricated only by the superior conduct and valour of our navy? If the honourable Baronet had any reason to think that 110,000 men would be sufficient, he ought to have found something better than such general surmises as, that in a former period we had a less number than we now propose to vote, and that we have lately been blessed with signal advantages. Sir, instead of lessening our exertions, and diminishing our means, a wise man, I think, would prefer following up and improving those advantages in such a manner as to enable you to wait till such overtures are made by the enemy as may make you feel that a compliance with them will be consistent with your own security and honour, and with your ideas of the situation in which such overtures will leave other countries. This is what a wise man will advise. From a combination of circumstances, we were threatened with great and various calamities ; fortunately we have turned them to the confusion and dismay of our enemies. Is that the moment when you should stop short? Is it not rather the moment which should give you well-founded expectations, that if the advantages you have gained be followed up, and improved by suitable exertions on the part of other powers, they will, to use the words of His Majesty's speech, " lead to the general deliverance of Europe ?" Does it become us, from regard to our own safety—is it consistent with our character and honour, to renounce the chance of becoming the deliverers of other independent nations? But, Sir, I expected to hear from the honourable Baronet which of the services of the navy he would desire to dispense with. Does he wish us, because

we have almost annihilated the navy of France in the Mediterranean, which she had by exertions and perseverance revived, after the disasters experienced at Toulon, does he, I say, wish us to abdicate the Mediterranean, and renounce all the political and commercial benefits that are likely to result from our victory? Does he wish that, with respect to ourselves, we should only retain the glory of our triumph, which no impolicy and negligence of ours can bury in oblivion? Does he desire us to forego all its advantages, and to give up all its benefits? Does he desire us to hold out to the Porte, when it has just roused from that apathy in which too many of the powers of Europe have been lulled, that we mean to discourage that returning vigour? Does he wish that the King of Naples, who feels that he owes his crown, his security, and his life, to our naval exertions, should find that the most important advantages would result from the exertions of the British navy, but that they are to be chilled by the cold economy of British counsels? Does he wish, when we have established our naval pre-eminence from Constantinople to Gibraltar, when every commercial and political advantage is awaking to us, that we should abandon that pre-eminence, and give up those advantages? I believe, Sir, he will not wish it. Look nearer home: We find the navies of Spain, of France, of Holland, blocked up. We find squadrons of our ships watching the ports of Cadiz, Brest, and the Texel, and the smaller ports in the intermediate space between those large ones. Does he wish us to release the remnant of the navy of the enemy from the captivity in which they are held in their own harbours? It may be a magnificent idea to give them an opportunity of coming out and fighting us; and though I should have no doubt what would be the event, yet it will hardly be the opinion of any wise man that we should abandon the coasts of the enemy, and leave those fleets which are now pouring, from month to month, their treasures into our ports; that we should leave them, I say, exposed to that piratical war which the enemy would carry on against them. We are not then to withdraw from the blockade of our enemy's harbours. We are not to withdraw those squadrons which afford now such sure protection to our trade. Where then are we to look? Is it to our distant possessions? After we have seen that the conduct of Government, however active, the vigilance and valour of the navy, however great, cannot always prevent attack; after we have seen this, does he wish that if any expedition should be able to effect its passage to the East Indies, it should find us there naked and unprotected? Have the events of the present year induced any one to wish that our force at the Cape of Good Hope and in the East Indies had

been less than it is? Look to the West Indies—when, by the chance of a wind, six or eight sail of the line might steal out of the enemy's ports, does he desire that Jamaica, or any of our other West-India possessions, should be left exposed to attack, instead of having a stationary force kept there? Look at home. Is it in the Channel, or off Cape Clear? Is it on the South or the North of Ireland that he wishes to curtail and reduce our force, in order, from a stretch of generosity, to put the enemy more on an equality with us? If, running through all these stations, we see reason to rejoice at the sufficiency of our force, where is it that he wishes for a reduction of it? Unless, Sir, on a deliberate view, he proves, that our fleets engaged in the blockade of France, of Spain, and of Holland, in the Mediterranean, in the East Indies, and in the West, in the protection of our trade off the coast of Ireland, and in maintaining our superiority in the Channel, do not furnish sufficient room for the distribution of our navy, manned by 120,000 seamen; unless he proves this, I think, that neither on this day, nor on the receiving of the report, will he find one man to second and support him.

Mr. TIERNEY coincided in opinion with Mr. Pitt: warmly attached to a system of economy as he was, so warmly, that he disliked to hear it at any time stigmatized by the name of cold economy, yet this was a particular service, which he voted with pleasure, because it was most congenial to British feelings. The number proposed to be voted was that which he conceived to be necessary. On these grounds, therefore, he should accede to the motion; he should accede to it with pleasure on another ground, which was, that that branch of the service had been conducted in a manner which deserved the confidence of the country.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR said, he had heard a very capital speech, but he had not heard any thing that made him alter his opinion upon the subject. He would consider on it farther, and say nothing more at present.

The motion for 120,000 seamen, including 20,000 marines, was now put and carried.

The following sums were voted:—

2,886,000*l.* for the pay of the seamen, at the rate of 1*l.* 17*s.* per man per month for thirteen months.

2,964,000*l.* for victualling the same for thirteen months.

4,650,000*l.* for the wear and tear of ships,

390,000*l.* for naval ordnance.

The report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that he had already given notice of an important financial measure which he meant to propose on Monday next; and he now wished to apprise the House, that on this day fortnight he would submit to them the Ways and Means for the ensuing year.

Mr. TIERNEY wished to be informed of the purport of the measure which the right honourable gentleman had to propose on this day se'nnight.

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that the benefits of the measure adopted last session for raising a considerable portion of the supplies within the year, had proved themselves and been felt so advantageous, that he could not anticipate any change in the disposition of the House to pursue the same plan at present. It had lately received the approbation and sanction of a meeting exceedingly well qualified to judge of its effects, and the measure which he meant to submit to them on Monday next, would follow the same principle, but in a mode more productive and infinitely less objectionable. Having no reason to apprehend that the House would alter its former opinion, he conceived that the whole difficulty would rest upon the details of the plan, and the necessary alterations in what they had before adopted. His intention therefore was, immediately after opening the subject, to bring in a bill, and fill up the blanks in a Committee, which he would propose to sit on Friday se'nnight, when the blanks would be filled up, and gentlemen would have the opportunity of discussing the principle on the question for the Speaker's leaving the chair, on the motion for its recommitment on Friday se'nnight, after having it printed. As he flattered himself that the principle would not be objected to, he expected that the bill would go through all the stages in the course of the week.

Tuesday, November 27.

The honourable Capt. BERKELEY moved the second reading of the bill for settling and securing an annuity of two thousand pounds on Admiral Lord Nelson, and the two next heirs in succession to whom the title shall descend, in consideration of the eminent services rendered by him to His Majesty and the public; which bill was read a second time.

Mr. HOBART brought up the report of the Committee of Supply, in which it had been voted that £20,000 men be employed for the navy service for the year 1799, including 20,000 marines.

The several resolutions were read a first time, and on their second reading granting, 120,000 men for the navy service,

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR rose, and spoke to the following effect :—After seriously deliberating on the important subject that is now before us, whether we ought or ought not to agree to the resolution reported from the Committee, by which it is proposed to employ so large a force as 120,000 seamen for the service of the ensuing year, I have no hesitation in declaring my full conviction, that the number proposed ought to be considerably diminished, and that 110,000 is the utmost extent to which we can possibly go, with any attention to propriety ; for whether we consider the depressed and ruined state of the navy of the enemy ; the skill, the spirit, and the gallantry which have been uniformly displayed by our own seamen, and which unquestionably render a considerable force less necessary than would otherwise be the case ; the assistance that we are likely to receive from Russian, from Turkish, from Portuguese, and from Neapolitan auxiliaries, not forgetting the new maritime power that is rising in America ; the aid which it is rumoured we are to obtain from the fleets of Sweden and of Denmark ; and above all, when we consider the situation of our finances, which renders economy indispensably necessary, not that *cold* economy, as it has been justly called, which means nothing, but a bold, an active, and a vigorous spirit of retrenchment, extending over all the departments of the state—in all these various points of view, and in other respects which I shall by and by take the liberty of stating, I consider the resolution of the Committee, for employing such a number as 120,000 seamen, as, in the highest degree, exceptionable, and I hope it will be in my power to prove it to the satisfaction of the House and of the Public.

But before I proceed to the discussion of the subject more immediately under our consideration, I think it necessary to advert to a point, which was urged with much force and ability in a very able and eloquent harangue from the right honourable gentleman opposite to me (Mr. Pitt) in the debate of yesterday, and which seemed to make a considerable impression on the House. The right honourable gentleman enumerated, with much distinctness and precision, the various services to which our naval force was applicable, and demanded, with some degree of exultation and triumph, whether I would point out any service where an abatement was admissible ? For my part, Sir, I had no particular knowledge, at that time, what the distribution of our naval force was, and how far it was exceptionable or otherwise : but I took the earliest possible opportunity of endeavouring to procure any information I could obtain

on the subject, and with that view sent for a publication, called Steel's Navy List, which is supposed to state facts with sufficient accuracy for, at least, the purposes of debate. On examining that List, I must confess, Sir, that I rejoiced at the accidental discussion that had come forward yesterday, for I saw there a statement of the amount of the British navy, and of the manner in which it is distributed, which I trust will as much astonish the right honourable gentleman as it did me. From that statement it appears, that we have in commission 143 sail of the line; of these there are only 85 in actual service: of the remainder, there are 28 fitting out in our different harbours, and no less a number than 30 sail of the line acting as guardships, or in similar situations, not forgetting receiving ships; all of them completely debarred from active employment. No wonder then that we want 120,000 seamen, (I am astonished that so few is sufficient,) when we have such a number as 37 sail of the line lying rotting in our harbours. This is a subject well entitled to the serious consideration of the House; and, in the investigation of which, we must all feel ourselves equally interested.

I must also, Sir, beg leave to take notice of a circumstance of an historical nature, intimately connected with the question now before us. I am reproached, Sir, with entertaining, upon the present occasion, a peculiar, and, indeed, singular opinion, as if no man but myself could ever think of so absurd a proposition, as that 110,000 seamen might be sufficient for the public service in such times as these. Let us see, Sir, how the matter really stands. I find, that about 12 months ago, on the 15th November, 1797, the same noble Lord (Lord Arden) moved the number of only 110,000 seamen for the service of the year 1798. It was opposed by an honourable and respectable Member, (Mr. Hufsey), who urged the necessity of an additional 10,000; but the original motion, being supported by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then a friend to what he called practical economy, was carried. The next day the honourable gentleman returned to the charge, and actually moved on the report, that the number should be increased to 120,000. But so fully satisfied at that time was every individual in the House, that 110,000 was perfectly sufficient, that he could not find a single man to second him: and if a division had taken place, I had resolved to vote against the amendment, and with the Minister. Some circumstances, however, led the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) to alter his opinion. On the 23d of April last, an additional number of 10,000 seamen was accordingly moved for, and the House, influenced by his authority, acquiesced in the proposal. I do not arise, therefore, to support a singular opi-

nion on the present occasion, but to maintain what is the recorded unanimous resolution of the House upon this subject twelve months ago, with the exception of only one individual, and a resolution, which, so far as I can judge, ought still to have remained unaltered.

I shall now proceed to consider the general question, whether it is wise and politic to employ so large a force as 120,000 seamen for the service of the ensuing year.

There are many Members of this House who must recollect the conclusion of the American war, when we had, as we have now, the navies of France, of Spain, and of Holland, to contend with, whose united strength was estimated at 140 sail of the line; yet we then only voted 110,000 seamen, and a great exertion it was reckoned. The limited navy of the enemy cannot now be stated at more than 70 sail of the line, or half the number it was in 1782. If, therefore, we were to observe the same proportion between the number of seamen we vote and the strength of the enemy, the noble Lord ought not to have proposed above 55,000 seamen. Can it then be seriously questioned, whether double that number, namely, 110,000 would not, with any tolerable management, be found more than fully adequate to the service of the nation; and that the remaining 10,000 can only answer the purpose of useless parade, or of idle profusion? The saving will amount to about a million: a sum of considerable consequence in the present deranged state of our finances. It will also be attended with this additional advantage, that if we begin with economising in this our favourite service, it will be a proper and natural prelude to other important savings, to which no other branch of the public expenditure can venture to object.

That the subject, however, may be more fully discussed, let us consider the effect of the proposed reduction, on the three suppositions, that a peace is to be concluded within twelve months, or, that the war between France and us alone is to be persevered in for some years longer, or that a general war is again to take place on the Continent? In every one of these cases, I contend, that the reduction of our seamen to 110,000 men, and of our other establishments in proportion, is a wise and politic measure.

We shall suppose, Sir, that we have at present in our pay 120,000 seamen and 400,000 soldiers, and that we shall reduce our establishments, when peace is happily restored, to 30,000 seamen and 50,000 soldiers; it is evident, therefore, that, sooner or later, we must discharge 90,000 seamen and 350,000 soldiers. Allow me then to ask, whether it would not be more prudent to

discharge a certain number of so enormous a mass, from time to time, as might be done consistently with the public safety and interests, rather than to dismiss the whole at once. By a gradual reduction of our navy and army, those who are discharged may find employment; whereas if we dismiss such a multitude as 440,000 seamen and soldiers at once, How can they possibly find, on the spur of the occasion, the means of subsistence? Many of them must take to depredation and plunder, and our jails will be filled with those who have fought and bled in the service of their country, and who have partaken in all our victories.

Besides, Sir, I have reason to know, from various parts of the kingdom, that labourers are almost universally wanted, both for agriculture and commercial purposes. Is it not therefore desirable, that any unnecessary number of hands which we may happen to have in our navy and army, should be immediately dismissed? Whilst we are carrying on a bloody and expensive war, let us not forget the industry and arts of peace, and let us permit as many British subjects as possible to be employed in all the various occupations which are so essential for our comfort and subsistence.

On these grounds, I am decidedly for a reduction, on the supposition that a peace is likely to take place within twelve months.

But let us take another alternative under our consideration, namely, that we are to carry on the war, on our own bottom, for some years longer; in that case an economical reduction is still more necessary.

It is well known, that the resources of a nation, whether they arise from credit or from taxation, are bounded, and that no prudent Government will run the risk of exhausting them to the last drop. We ought to remember that celebrated maxim in politics "*Cavendum est ne exhausto aerario repentina calamitate respublica deferatur.*" Let us take care, that the nation is not overrun with some sudden calamity from an exhausted Exchequer. It is a maxim so full of policy and wisdom, that I wish it were engraved in some conspicuous part of the House, where it might attract the notice of every Member in it, but more especially of the Chairmen of our Committees of Supply, and of the Ministers of our Finances.

Let us suppose, however, that we have still a reserve of 60 millions to be expended in war. The right honourable gentleman, whose proposed war expenditure is at least 30 millions per annum, would waste the whole in two years; whereas by reducing our establishment to a sum not exceeding 20 millions, we may carry on the war for three years, without being more exhausted, and, in all probability, if properly conducted, with equal success. Indeed my

wish would be, to see our establishments formed on so moderate a scale, that we might carry on the war for years, without the risk of financial embarrassments. In that case, we might be sure of ultimately terminating the war, on terms perfectly consistent with the safety and interests of the country, the only terms that shall ever meet with my approbation.

Let us next consider the question, on the supposition, that the continental war is to be renewed: in that case, surely there can be no occasion for such expensive establishments. The French, instead of molesting us, will have their attention sufficiently occupied with attacking their enemies on the Continent, and we ought to embrace so favourable an opportunity of keeping our public expenditure within moderate bounds.

I thought it my duty, Sir, as this is the first vote this session connected with the public expenditure, to inculcate the necessity of more attention to economy than has lately been practised in our various public departments, and on the ground of public economy, *to make my stand*. I wish, Sir, completely to prevent, and, if possible, to do away for ever the threatened tax on income; any attempt to enforce which will give rise to such nice and delicate questions, that it will shake the country to its centre. It is proposed by that wild speculation, and by oppressing, either directly or indirectly, every class, nay, every individual in the community, to raise a sum which cannot possibly exceed 10 millions. I pledge myself to prove to the satisfaction of the House and of the Public, that those 10 millions may be saved in our public expences, and consequently that the threatened tax on income is perfectly unnecessary. A worthy and respectable Baronet (Sir William Pulteney) stated last year, that he would point out the means of reducing our expences, to the amount, I think, of 5 millions; and it is but a poor compliment to the battle of the Nile to say, that so great a victory may be the means of bringing about an additional reduction to, at least, as large an amount.

I had, indeed, Sir, fondly flattered myself, that, after Lord Nelson's victory, the Ministers themselves would have moved very considerable diminution in all our establishments, and that a still greater reduction than any they were likely to suggest would have been enforced by this House. Such a reduction would be the best acknowledgement that could be made for such meritorious services, both to the gallant favourite of the nation, and the fleet he has the honour to command. That brave officer has received as many proud testimonials of honour, admiration, and respect, as the most ambitious individual could almost aspire to. He has heard the

cheering and triumphant shouts of victory from his own fleet, and received the surrendered swords of the bravest of the enemy.

He has justly merited the honours of the British Peerage, and a liberal pecuniary grant from the bounty of this House. He has received the applauses of his Sovereign, the thanks of the two Houses, and the admiration of all Europe; and if in addition to all these sources of solid satisfaction, his brilliant victory proved the source of restoring the blessings of peace, or, at least, of reducing the public expences to the amount of from 8 to 10 millions per annum, which I believe might be the case, and of rescuing his countrymen from the financial oppressions with which they are threatened, what would not his feelings be? I am persuaded that he would prefer the heartfelt pride and exultation he would derive from such circumstances, to all the other honours and advantages he has obtained.

I have thus, Sir, stated what occurs to me on the interesting subject now before us; and I beg leave to add, that I shall continue, whenever any circumstance shall render it necessary, to submit to the consideration of the House, from time to time, with truth and firmness, what occurs to me regarding the situation of our affairs, and the conduct of our Ministers, fully convinced, that, by following that system, I shall perform a duty becoming a Member of this House, and a friend to the Country.

Mr. THOMAS WALLACE could by no means agree in opinion with the honourable Baronet who just sat down, notwithstanding the declaration he had made, that his sentiments upon the present question were the result of a cool and careful examination. He could not help saying that he was astonished at seeing the honourable Baronet persist in his opposition; for had he considered, as he says he has, the conduct of the department which some gentlemen had been pleased to compliment, he might perhaps have discovered that the compliment was not undeserved; in saying this he did not arrogate any part of it to himself; but on the conduct of those who were more nearly engaged in that department, he did not see that there could attach any blame, even if their exertions had not been crowned with the brilliant success that had lately attended them. Those who were at the head of the Admiralty were known to pay the closest attention to their department; and surely the honourable Baronet might do them the justice to suppose that they were not unacquainted with what was competent to the naval service. They were also as warmly disposed towards the exercise of economy as any description of gentlemen in that House could be, and with every disposition to economy, they felt that they must press the

supply now demanded, because they knew it to be necessary ; and if subsequent events should allow them to diminish it, they would be as forward as the honourable Baronet to improve the opportunity. In the case mentioned by the honourable Baronet for attempting a reduction of our naval establishment, he supposed he alluded to the consequences of Lord Duncan's victory ; our naval force, it was then supposed, might admit of some reduction ; the reduction was proposed and objected to ; it afterwards, however, took place, and what was the consequence ? Did not this attempt at economy prove unwise or unsafe, and a few months afterwards, was not an application made to Parliament for an addition of ten thousand seamen more ? This part of the business the candour of the honourable Baronet has thought fit to suppress ; but if he argued on the same principle, that a reduction should be made this year in consequence of Lord Nelson's signal victory, and if the reduction were made and afterwards repented of, what would be the language of the honourable Baronet ? Would he not then say, did you not recollect what happened last year ? or, why did you not benefit by experience ? The honourable Baronet is also very pointed in his disapprobation of keeping thirty ships of the line as guardships. Whether he has considered this point with the same degree of coolness and caution, it was rather too difficult to say, but the reasons of his disapprobation he has thought unnecessary to explain. But these reasons it might be allowable perhaps to guess at. Does not the honourable Baronet disapprove of this part of the service merely because he regards the ships so employed, as keeping a number of men in a state of inertness, who might be applied to a service of greater activity ? But, perhaps, the honourable Baronet did not know, or recollect, that these ships were of the utmost utility to those on more active service ; they served as rendezvous and depots for the new-raised men, who were from thence distributed among the other ships in proportion as they stood in need of hands. For his part, therefore, he could see no possible benefit that could arise from this or any other reduction in the naval establishment ; on the contrary, he felt that any reduction must be attended with serious and real inconvenience. The honourable Baronet speaks of our naval establishment at the close of the American war. 110,000 seamen were then voted, though the enemy's force was then greater than that of France is now. But what was the conduct of Parliament after the glorious victory won by Lord Rodney on the 12th April, 1782 ? Did they not follow up the advantages resulting from that memorable day, not by taking away, but by adding 10,000 seamen to their previous establishment ? In every war it was prudent to place our navy on

a respectable footing, and not merely on such as the appearance or the necessity of the case might require. Nothing that had fallen from the honourable Baronet had at all gone to prove that any thing in the present establishment was superfluous. He admits that the fruits of our naval superiority are conspicuous in the splendid victories we have achieved—in the protection afforded to our trade and commerce—and in the imprisoned state of the enemy's ships, which continue to be blocked up in all their ports. This, it seems, is enough for him; but the war ought to be prosecuted with vigour and spirit; it should be a war of attack, and not merely of defence, as the honourable Baronet would have it; but the few men now disputed about might make the whole difference between an offensive and a defensive war. The latter would be pusillanimous and inglorious; the former what becomes the honour of the British people, and the proud situation in which the nation now stands. To rest in the languor of a defensive war would be permitting France to recover from the blow by which she has been astonished and confounded; but following up the glorious advantage of our victories will alone lead to the attainment of that great blessing which the exertions of the country aspire to, a safe, durable, and honourable peace. To economy he trusted he was as zealous a friend as the honourable Baronet, but in a time of war he was no friend to economy of exertion—in certain cases such economy would be ruin: the spirit that would dictate it could lead to nothing but to a war merely and purely defensive, and to the protraction of the contest to an incalculable length—it is a spirit that, by paralyzing our energies and crippling our exertions, would permit the enemy again to breathe and recover from his dismay, and perhaps place the happy termination of hostilities at a distance not easy to be ascertained.

General TARLETON wished the House not to mistake what were the sentiments of gentlemen on his side of the House, respecting the importance and value of the services of the navy of the country. He could, with perfect truth, assure them, that not one of his honourable friends entertained the same sentiments on the subject as the honourable Baronet. It was his wish, as much as the wish of any man living, that the ravages of war might be speedily suppressed. It was the wish of every friend to humanity that peace might be speedily restored; but every Englishman could only wish for a safe, honourable, and permanent peace. Nothing could so effectually lead to this termination of our struggles, as our resuming a posture at once lofty, vigorous, and commanding. It would emphatically impress the enemy with sentiments of deep respect for our character;

and considering how daring and enterprising were the Rulers of France, he could see no security against the force of the Enemy, but in the variety and skill, the extent and combination, of our own preparations. Had the honourable Baronet considered the subject in this way, perhaps no objection would have been heard to the vote of that evening: but it was certain we owed almost every thing to our navy; and, perhaps, in no respect so much, as for the great zeal and promptitude with which Sir Roger Curtis was dispatched, on a recent occasion, to Earl St. Vincent. He believed all the events of the war were destined to grow out of this single circumstance; for it was most certain that the achievement of Lord Nelson resulted from it; and if this last event was but rightly improved, he firmly believed it might bring the war to a secure and glorious termination.

The resolution was then put and agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that the act of the 38th of his present Majesty be read, empowering His Majesty to avail himself of the voluntary offers of the English Militia to extend the ordinary circle of their service; which being read,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the House must be aware of the invaluable effects produced by the singular gallantry of those regiments of militia who had so nobly stepped forward with so seasonable an offer of their services, to assist quelling the rebellion in Ireland—but great and happy as these effects might be, their beneficial operation might prove ineffectual should any diminution be prematurely made in the cause from which it was derived. The state of Ireland might sooner or later dispense with that caution; but whether the whole, or only a part of that force could safely be drawn from it, it was not at present his intention to examine. His wish merely was, that the act should be continued in force some time longer, and in this wish he made no doubt but that the wisdom of the House would concur. He then concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill for continuing for a time to be limited, the act alluded to, which was granted.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, November 28.

Lord GRENVILLE brought a message from His Majesty on the subject of Lord Nelson's annuity, similar in effect to that delivered to the House of Commons on Monday, and desiring their Lordships to concur in the measure therein recommended to the Commons.

After the message had been read by the Lord Chancellor, and at the table,

Lord GRENVILLE said, it was wholly unnecessary for him to detain their Lordships by a single word upon the subject, as the sense of the House on the great merit and importance of Lord Nelson's services had been fully and warmly expressed by all the noble Lords who spoke in the debate, which was concluded by an unanimous vote of the thanks of the House to that noble Lord and his officers, a tribute in the highest degree honourable and flattering to them. He would, therefore, trouble their Lordships no farther than by reading and moving the words of an address to His Majesty, returning His Majesty their thanks for his gracious communication, and assuring His Majesty that the House would concur in the measure recommended: and the address was agreed to *nem. diss.*

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, November 28.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day, for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider of Ways and Means for raising a supply granted to His Majesty.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee, he moved the following resolutions—That it is the opinion of this Committee that towards raising the supply granted to His Majesty, the several duties imposed on sugar by the 27th, 34th, and 37th of his present Majesty, and also the duties of excise on tobacco and snuff, directed in the last session of Parliament to be continued until

the 5th of March, 1799, should be farther continued until the 5th day of March, 1800.

That four shillings in the pound, and no more, be imposed on all pensions, offices, &c. and continued.

That the duty on malt, &c. be continued from the 23d of June 1799, to the 24th of June 1800.

These resolutions were agreed to, and the House being resumed, the report was ordered for Friday.

Friday, November 30.

The order of the day being read for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of Supply, the army, navy, and ordnance estimates were ordered to be referred to the said Committee.

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR (Windham) said, he believed, the readiest way to give that information which the House might be desirous of obtaining respecting the army estimates would be, to state chiefly those estimates compared with the two preceding years, and to notice the difference of the charges between the last year and the present, and to state in what manner that difference took its rise. The estimates for the year 1797 amounted to the sum of 6,900,000*l.*—in the year 1798 they were not voted all at once, but at two separate times; the first sum voted was 5,900,000*l.* which, compared with the estimates of the year preceding that, viz. 1797, would be found to be less by 900,000*l.* That is, the year 1797 exceeded the estimate of the year 1798, by the sum he had mentioned. But in the course of the latter year, other circumstances arose, which made it necessary to bring forwards other estimates; these second estimates amounted to the sum of 2,316,000*l.* making the whole 8,305,000*l.* The objects to which these second estimates related were, the supplementary militia, which the situation of the country made it necessary to call out and embody; the provisional cavalry, the volunteer corps, and the barrack department. Of these, the supplementary militia was an object entirely new, and had never before entered into estimates—the volunteer corps, though they had in some degree before entered into the army estimates, yet as they had been called out but in part, were not a head of considerable expence, and, therefore, that head, though not an entire new charge, yet was a considerable extension of expence. Another head of extraordinary charge was, in the article of barracks, which naturally followed as a consequence of the augmentation of the number of troops: therefore it was, that the estimates of the

year 1798 exceeded the estimates of the year 1797 by the sum which he already stated. Those circumstances which operated in the year 1798, still continued, and caused a like excess in the present year, therefore there would be found an excess of near a million in the present estimates beyond the year 1797. There was one circumstance indeed which first arose in the last year, and which would of course be permanent, he meant an increase of pay to the soldiery. Though the articles composing the estimates might vary, yet gentlemen conversant in those accounts knew, that the general circumstances were the same. The principal heads were of guards, garrisons, &c. and were similar in this year to other preceding years.

By the regulation of Parliament last year, gentlemen would recollect that the service of part of our militia regiments was extended to Ireland, and if it should be judged necessary to continue that service, it was probable that Ireland might contribute towards defraying the expences of those troops necessary for their own protection. The heads of the cause of increase in the present year would be found as follows—the first was, an augmentation of dragoons, which amounted to 65,000l. ; the next was, an increase of the companies of foot guards from 100 to 120 men, which caused an increase of expence of 120,000l. ; the next head of expence was one small in comparison with the advantages derived from it—he alluded to the appointment of regimental paymasters, the object of which was, to remove those delays which had hitherto existed in regimental accounts. The sum under this head was only 27,000l. which was most amply compensated by the advantages resulting from their establishment. The great head of excess in this year's account arose from the embodying of the supplementary militia—it came in but partially last year, but now it was to be provided for the whole of the year. The Scotch militia was another head quite new, and had not before entered into the estimates. Another head of charge was, an increase of fencible infantry. To this also must be added, an increase of the staff at home. The reason of the latter increase arose from the circumstances of the country last year, and the menacing posture of our enemy ;—as we were obliged to collect numbers of troops, of course an increase of the staff followed. A small additional expence arose from the increased allowances to innkeepers. The charge of volunteer corps, although not entirely a new head, yet at present was a head considerably extended in the estimates now before the House. The next additional charge that occurred was, that of barracks, and the reasons for that increase might be accounted for upon the same principles as for the increase of the staff, namely, on account of the increase of the troops during the

last year for the purpose of repelling any attack which might be made against us. Another article which it would be necessary for him to notice, was one which he thought would meet the approbation of every gentleman—he alluded to a small increase of the pensions to officers widows. His private opinion was, that it was now much too small, and when it was considered to what a deplorable reverse of fortune those persons must be reduced before they received that reward, he was convinced that the small additional sum could not be considered as improperly bestowed. The whole account under this head did not exceed 12,000*l*. But these articles of excess were reduced by some other articles of saving—we had formerly to provide for foreign corps, an expence which had now ceased. The reduction of provisional cavalry was another head of saving. It was not necessary to enter into minute details on this point. Though they were not provided for, but for a part of last year, and were now provided for during the whole year, yet the reduction of numbers more than counterbalanced the shorter period of time. To this was to be added an additional sum from the island of Jamaica, and a farther allowance from Ireland, in consequence of the troops sent from this country to their assistance. Scotch roads and bridges were an article in former estimates, but now they were totally omitted, being provided for in another manner.

There now occurred another article, to which he wished to say a few words. In the present estimate the expence of the war-office department was not included. When the expences and mode of defraying the charges of that department was new modelled, he differed in opinion from many gentlemen as to the efficacy of those regulations in an economical point of view. Many gentlemen supposed that the monstrous fees which had occurred during one year, from peculiar circumstances, were the average amount of the fees. It was true that, from particular circumstances, from recruiting the army, and the situation in which the country then stood, those fees in one year amounted to an enormous sum; but since that time the amount of them had as suddenly and as rapidly decreased. He much questioned whether the new regulation of paying fixed salaries from fees would, in the event be any saving to the country, as he doubted whether the amount of the fees this year would pay the salaries. In fixing the amount of those salaries he had not gone beyond what ought to be paid, considering the talents and qualifications required, and calculating what those talents and qualifications would procure their possessor in other situations of life; on the contrary, he thought they were rather under than over paid. He very much doubted whether the regular and usual fees would pay the

permanent establishment of the office. He had stated all that occurred to him to be necessary to state. He should therefore move the resolutions, and wait to hear if any gentleman required explanation in any particular point.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that what he might hereafter think his duty directed him to say, he should not oppose voting upon the estimates now; but although he said this, yet he could not help adding, that he was not a little mortified by the speech of the Secretary at War. He could have conceived, that the advantages of our victories and our triumphs would have been immediately felt in the diminution of our expences; whereas it appeared that some of them were increasing. The public had a right to say, that the Secretary at War had deluded them; for last year the danger of invasion operated upon the public mind, and much of the expence was incurred to provide against that calamity. Now the skill and valour of our gallant officers, and the steadiness of our men, had removed all fear with regard to invasion; and yet Ministers held out no hope of any retrenchment, even in useless offices. He should not vote upon any of the resolutions of to-night, nor should he deliver in detail, his sentiments upon them, for he wished to reserve himself until he had taken time to consider more fully on the matter, and had an opportunity of conversing with others who were capable of giving him information. There would be no inconvenience from this mode, for he apprehended the resolutions would remain for two or three days. He rose now merely to take notice of the speech of the Secretary at War, only as far as it regarded the subject of economy. That was a question upon which there was but little variety of opinion. He was sure there was not a man who heard him, who did not think there ought to be the severest economy in every part of the state. Now, with regard to the office of the Secretary at War, it appeared there were fees there which he himself had admitted to be enormous. He meant no reproach upon any individual whatever; at the same time he must say, that these things must have been long foreseen, and might and ought to have been provided for. But what was the case now? The gentlemen who had reaped the advantage of these enormous fees were to have an additional allowance, because the fees of last year had not been equal to the expence calculated by the Committee, and allowed upon the new arrangement. He did not mean to insinuate that the Secretary at War was interested in any of these fees; on the contrary, he believed his motives to be pure and honourable in all such particulars. But it appeared now, that a farther sum will be wanted to make up deficiencies in offices, &c. and this after a full confi-

deration of the matter, and a report made by a Committee of Finance. He really thought that this was matter worthy of very grave consideration. He thought the public had been deluded in a great measure upon this matter, for so it certainly appeared from the speech of the Secretary at War to-night. He said this with the more confidence, because he was convinced of the absolute necessity of rigid economy in every department of the state that can bear it. But while he said this, he was one of the last men in this country that would wish, by an ill-judged notion of saving, to damp the ardour of the people of this country. He wished not only that their force should be respectable, but that they might be made to stand in a proud and menacing attitude against the enemy. He would add, although by so doing, he hazarded some reproach out of doors, that it was not in the salaries of public officers that he wished to see a general deduction, for he was persuaded, that, with a few exceptions, they were not over-paid, considering all the circumstances of things at present.

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR said a few words in explanation, and could not agree with Mr. Tierney with regard to the effect of the fees. He did not see how, without injustice, any of the gentlemen who had received the large fees alluded to, could be called upon to return them.

Mr. Chancellor PITT was inclined never to oppose economy while it was consistent with the due performance of public duty; but he would not lose sight of the sentiment which was so properly expressed by the honourable gentleman opposite to him (Mr. Tierney). That honourable gentleman had said, that this country should be put in a powerful and menacing attitude towards the enemy. But then he said that we had not the full advantage of our successes—successes which were felt and enjoyed by this country, while every other nation in the world beheld with astonishment and admiration the repeated exertions which produced them. It seemed that we were to forego every idea of an invasion of this country; and therefore we had an opportunity of attending to minute economy. He hoped the Committee would not be so unmanly as to give way to that idea; he said, “unmanly,” for he knew of nothing more unmanly than to catch at success, and to neglect all future exertion as unnecessary. Undoubtedly nothing could excel—indeed, hitherto, nothing had equalled the splendour of our successes; they would, indeed, in former times, and under former circumstances, have terminated any contest; but what successes, what triumphs, what glory of her enemy could effect the disposition of that nation whose rulers count as nothing the interest,

the treasure, or even the blood of their subjects? Therefore, with the best wishes for economy, he could not indulge a hope of carrying it farther than it could be accompanied by prudence. We had had to deal, we have to deal yet, with an enemy of whose character it may at least be said, they are not limited by any rule of law, or justice, or prudence, or by any of the maxims which are supposed to govern, or to have at any time governed, the policy of those states which are called regulated Monarchies, for they had hitherto been totally uncontrolled by remorse, compunction, prudence, or humanity. They have shewn a readiness to hazard their own existence for the bare chance of destroying this country, or indeed of overturning the liberty of other nations. But, because they are at present discomfited in their scheme at the Nile, and because that expedition has turned out to be a disaster, and has reduced them to a temporary confusion; yet they might not have given up all ideas of invasion on this country; and should they entertain such a thought, how wild and chimerical soever it may be, yet it would gain force in their minds, and add vigour to their projects, if they saw this country day after day weakening that force, which, while it is entire, will remain invulnerable. He was, therefore, most clearly of opinion, that we should increase instead of lessening our efforts. He then proceeded to take notice of some of the heads of the estimates before the Committee. The honourable gentleman opposite to him had professed not to be very well acquainted with the subject, but yet he had exhibited some complaints against the largeness of the expence this year. Now upon that subject it was observable that part only of the supplementary militia was voted. Some of it was only voted for ten, and some for only eight months, instead of twelve, as they were now proposed to be. This was an excess upon the estimate of last year it was true, but it was unavoidable. There had been some regiments of guards also to be made up, for those who had gone to Ireland. Indeed they were not now, what they had been sometimes supposed to be, for parade and ostentation. No, they had shewn themselves worthy of the British name upon the Continent, in Ireland, and at that glorious, although unfortunate, expedition to Ostend. As to the subject of an alteration in the fees of offices, he avowed at once he did not agree with his right honourable friend (Mr. Windham): he considered the late arrangement as necessary, and would be serviceable to the public; for he considered that diminishing that which is already too great, and adding it to that which is already too small, was good and sound policy: and that was the spirit of the new arrangement in the office alluded to. As to the barracks, it should be considered that

all the troops, at least the greater part of them, were in barracks. The expence attending this subject had been stated roundly at the sum of 500,000*l.* but nothing was more fallacious than to state this sum as an additional public expence on account of barracks; for it contained many provisions for the subsistence of the troops; it contained all the expence of their being cantoned, or lodged in public houses, which expence would have been brought forward in another shape but for these barracks. He then observed generally, that he saw no reduction in our establishment which we could make consistently with our safety.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that notwithstanding what had fallen from the right honourable gentleman, he still retained the opinion he had expressed. He had heard no argument which tended to convince him that the force in existence was not sufficient for every purpose of national defence, nor had it been stated that any new circumstances had arisen since last year which rendered so great an augmentation of force necessary. The right honourable gentleman had alluded to the necessity of maintaining a considerable force to repel any attempt the French might make at invasion. Undoubtedly every means ought to be adopted to repel any attempt of that kind, but it could not be necessary for him to state, that they could not effect an invasion of this kingdom without ships, and the events which had lately occurred were such as threw inseparable difficulties in the way of such an attempt. It had been stated in excuse for increasing the forces in this country, that 17,000 men had been sent to Ireland; he admitted that a large force had been sent to that country; but when did that take place? These troops were sent over in the last spring, and since that period the occasion which rendered it necessary for these troops to be sent to that country had very fortunately ceased to exist. Since that period also the French navy had sustained most signal and unexampled defeats; and since that period the left wing of that army, which had been called the *Army of England*, had been safely landed in Egypt. These were circumstances which, in his opinion, rendered this augmentation wholly unnecessary.

With respect to what had fallen from the right honourable gentleman upon the propriety of the augmentation of the guards, he begged, in the strongest manner to express his sense of the bravery and discipline of that body of men. These considerations, however, if they were not sufficient to induce Ministers to diminish our forces, were at least, in his opinion, very decisive reasons to prove that any increase of our military establishment was wholly unnecessary. If indeed it could be suspected, that instead of being satisfied

that we had provided the means of our own security, we indulged ideas of conquests against liberty, like the enemy. If that was the object, he must give it his entire disapprobation, because he was decidedly of opinion that we ought to confine ourselves within the establishments which had been deemed sufficient for the service of last year. With respect to what had been said about the emoluments of office, he was very ready to declare, that the office which was held by the right honourable Secretary, was very far from being overpaid; indeed he was of opinion, though it might not be very popular out of doors, that very few of the great offices were overpaid. But at the same time he did not deny that he was clearly satisfied of the necessity of adopting a system of economy upon a large scale—there were undoubtedly many great offices which might, without any injury to the public service, be abolished. He felt no hesitation to say, that he thought an honourable gentleman on the other side of the House might do very well without 4000*l.* a year, which he received as Treasurer of the Navy—He did not think that office had much contributed to the glorious victory obtained by Admiral Nelson. With respect to the office to which some allusions had been made, he had only one observation to make, which was, that some offices were marked 1000*l.* a year, as a salary in time of peace. If the persons holding these offices were entitled to them from long and laborious services, it would materially alter the question; but he did not approve of giving a man 1000*l.* a year in peace, because during the war he had filled a very lucrative situation. With respect to what had been said about barracks, the right honourable gentleman had wholly misunderstood him. It was not his intention to take the sense of the Committee at present, but he should trouble the House with some observations upon the bringing up the report.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the honourable gentleman who spoke last had indulged in many observations which he could not allow to pass by unnoticed, and he had also lapsed into some mistakes which he felt it incumbent upon him to rectify. If the House is to give credit to the honourable gentleman's assertion, the country has nothing hereafter to dread from the threats of the enemy to invade our coasts: on that head we may dismiss all our apprehensions and alarm; for without ships, or any thing like a fleet, says he, how is it possible for the enemy to attempt the execution of any threat of that nature? But the fleet and armament, on the signal and complete destruction of which the honourable gentleman has principally rested his assertion and grounded his argument, are well known by the House not to have been intended or directed against

the coasts of these kingdoms, and therefore its glorious overthrow by Admiral Lord Nelson is no reason for relaxing our exertions or curtailing our establishment. Splendid and important as that great victory must now be felt, and ever must appear, and beneficial, decisive, and extensive as its effects may prove, yet they do not justify the Executive Government of the country in suspending their activity, or in relinquishing the measures which it has been their opinion should be exerted and pursued for its independence and security. That security which the honourable gentleman imagines solely to grow out of the immortal triumph achieved by Lord Nelson, was, to a certain extent, complete long before the annihilation of the Toulon fleet; long, indeed, before Lord Duncan's victory off the coast of Holland; and, perhaps, even before the memorable and brilliant action fought and gained by Admiral Lord St. Vincent. Should our naval superiority authorize us to remit our efforts and to lull our anxiety, we might, as the honourable gentleman recommends it, limit our expences, and retrench our establishments; for long before the date of these transcendent naval exploits, we had shewn ourselves the undisputed sovereign of the seas. But experience has long taught us, that we have to deal with an enemy whose every motion should be watched with jealous vigilance, and whose attempts must be frustrated by energy and precaution. For though the chances are as three to one in our favour, or even in a much larger proportion, we should never be unprepared against the inveterate and restless animosity of the enemy: nor proud and confident, as we may justly feel in the pre-eminence of our naval situation, should we leave our situation by land, where we may also be called to fight, less guarded, formidable, and secure. This was the avowed object, and professed principle of his right honourable friend last year, and on the same principle is he determined (and wisely determined) to act for the ensuing year; and for that object, and on that principle shall we continue to act, that we may baffle and confound the wild, daring, and desperate attempts of an enterprising and presuming foe. Nor should, (he would again repeat it) their complete defeat on the Nile, in the least dispose or encourage us to forget the spirit that actuates them, or unbend us in the vigilance and vigour with which it ought on our side to be watched and resisted. But the honourable gentleman has thought proper to insinuate an hope, that, in continuing, or, as he seems to imagine, in increasing our military establishment, we are not to imitate the example of France, and attempt (as he threw out in a parenthesis), to invade and crush the liberties of other nations. When the honourable gentleman expressed this jealousy and fear, that it

might be the object of our military establishment to oppress the liberties of other countries, he trusted that the allusion was not made to what are called the liberties of France; and that no comparison should be attempted to be made, either in a moral or a political view, between the manner in which we might endeavour to conquer the liberties of France (that is, the most atrocious despotism that ever was exercised, or endured by any nation), and the design and attempt of France to conquer the liberties of England, or, what their Directorial Government is pleased to style, the Slavery of Egypt. To conquer liberties of that description, or rather to wrest from the hand of France that iron sceptre of oppression which has proved so formidable to surrounding nations, and so fatal and intolerable to those who already groan under their yoke, would, he did not hesitate to say, be the greatest and most glorious act of benevolence: the greatest and most glorious act of kindness, in the performance of which any nation could co-operate for the delivery and independence of another. He trusted, therefore, that no such comparison was intended between the designs and operations of the two countries; for never could he suffer such a parallel to be drawn; or that the name of liberty should be given to a system of oppression and slavery, that has been extending the same desolations to every land, however remote, that has already cursed every nation within its reach. Though this was not the object of any measure now before the House, yet he would not disavow the wish, or the hope, that if any such effect could be produced, as that of extinguishing that monstrous system, he should think it proper and glorious for this nation to co-operate in its achievement. Thus much, however, he thought it advisable to say, to prevent any conclusion being drawn from the parallel that seemed to be instituted between the Councils and projects of the two countries. But though it be not the design of Great Britain to embark as a principal in the delivery of France from her present thralldom, yet there are other objects, in the accomplishment of which it should be our glory to co-operate, were an opening to offer not unfavourable to such an attempt, and that is to rescue other independent countries from the slavery under which they are now struggling. Such object, he trusted, there was no man would oppose; much less did he expect that any one would confound it with the objects pursued by the profligate ambition of the enemy. But whether such an opening might take place, or what should be our best mode of improving such an opportunity, was not the subject of this day's discussion. His only reason for alluding to it was, that if such opening did actually arise, and if such an endeavour was made on our part to benefit by it, no one

should dare to assume a comparison so unjustly founded, and so dishonourable to our principles, or be permitted to confound an honourable exertion upon our side, to rescue the liberties of oppressed countries from the gripe of France, with that plan of monstrous tyranny which France has been pursuing to overwhelm the liberties, and ruin the independence of every nation within her reach. Nor were the mistakes into which the honourable gentleman has fallen, less glaring than his previous observations were reprehensible. He contends that we are now voting a larger force than was voted last year, or rather incurring a greater expence—but did he pay a little more attention to it, he must perceive that the difference arose from the expence attending the supplementary militia which in the former estimates was made out only for half a year. There is therefore no real increase in the expence, but only appears such, because it is now made permanent, and computed for the full year. The other increase arises from a great force, especially sensible, being sent to Ireland. They were ordered thither in the end of Spring, and the militia, for the most part, not till the summer was far advanced, and nearly about the close of the last session of Parliament. Besides, the regiments now proposed to be raised were not new regiments, but some that were to be filled up, and were therefore now brought upon the estimate of 1799. The mistake of the honourable gentleman is therefore evident, since allowing for the reductions now made, the force upon the whole is less, or at least not greater, than that of last year. Surely it could not be his wish to diminish the amount of the force in Ireland, for the rebellion was not there extinguished, as the honourable gentleman seemed to assert, on the authority of His Majesty's speech. The speech by no means acknowledged its extinction: it merely said that it was curbed and repressed; but there was no authority from the Throne for saying farther: neither did His Majesty's speech insinuate that there was no longer any danger of invasion in that quarter, or that the rebellion might not again break out; and indeed, whoever has looked attentively at the state of Ireland, and as to what it has been, and what it may be, must see and acknowledge that every measure of vigour and of precaution is still necessary for confirming in an effectual manner the returning tranquillity of that country.

The resolutions were then put and agreed to.

Monday, December 3.

Lord Nelson's Annuity Bill was read a third time, and passed.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of Ways and Means, for a supply to be granted to His Majesty. The House having resolved itself into the said Committee, Mr. Hobart in the chair,

Mr. Chancellor Pitt moved, that the act of 38th of His present Majesty, chap. 16, for granting an aid or contribution to His Majesty, might be read, and that it might be an instruction to the Committee to consider of the said act. He then addressed the Committee in a perspicuous and eloquent speech, nearly as follows.— Before I proceed to submit to the Committee the very important matters which form the subject of this day's consideration, I conceive it necessary to take a diligent review of the general amount of the total services of the present year, and of the ways and means applicable to those services. Without adopting this method, I do not think it would be possible to inform your judgement with any degree of accuracy, respecting the propriety of the measure I have to propose, for raising a considerable part of the supplies within the year, or be able to enforce those arguments I shall adduce in support of that measure. It is a matter of extreme satisfaction to me, that it will appear to the Committee, from the estimate I shall now produce, compared with former estimates, that although our expences are beyond what they ever were, yet that our means of supplying them are so ample and extensive, that the country is placed in a proud and eminent situation beyond what it has enjoyed at any former period. I shall begin by stating what has been voted as the amount of the supply under the head of the services for the navy, with the exception of what is necessary for transport services. All these accounts have this day been laid before us; and it appears that the total sum for the ordinaries and extraordinaries of the navy and transport services amount to 13,642,000*l.* being the same sum within a small amount as was granted in the course of last session, and which I have the satisfaction of assuring the Committee is likely to prove sufficient for the whole expences of the navy, without leaving any necessity for augmentation. The next head of expence is the army, in which the estimates amount to 8,840,000*l.* Gentlemen will recollect the extraordinaries in the course of last session, to be incurred in 1798, were stated at 3,200,000*l.* There was

also voted a sum of 1,000,000*l.* as a vote of credit; applicable as extraordinaries to unforeseen expences. This vote of credit will cover all the extraordinary expences to the end of the year, so that, as in the article of the navy, there will be no past arrears to be discharged. But with respect to the vote of credit for this year, one million will be wanted to discharge that amount issued in Exchequer bills. Under the article, then, of army expenditure, there remain the extraordinary services of the year 1799, which I may put at two millions. The total amount then under the head of army will be 8,840,000*l.* including the one million for the discharge of Exchequer bills issued, and two millions for the extraordinary services of 1799. Under the head of ordnance services, including the expences which have not been provided for, there has been voted the sum of 1,570,000*l.* The next article is that of the miscellaneous services. The plantation estimates have already been voted, but there are other minuter parts of those services which have not yet undergone a discussion in this House. The amount will be rather less than it was last session. I state it at 600,000*l.* To this is to be added the usual sum voted towards the redemption of the national debt, above the annual million, which is 200,000*l.* There are other sums which are generally voted under the head of deficiency of grants. Among these is a sum due for interest on Treasury and Exchequer bills paid off, amounting to 565,000*l.*—the discount on prompt payments upon the loan, amounting to 210,000*l.* the interest on Exchequer bills circulated within the year, and charged upon the succeeding year, three hundred thousand pounds. In addition to this, there is the deficiency of the land and malt in the act passed two years ago, amounting to 300,000*l.* These sums swell the total of the supply to 29,272,000*l.* This total, Sir, does not differ in any material degree from the amount of the supply of last session. Towards raising this supply, it will naturally occur to the mind of every gentleman in the Committee, that the same resources will be applicable as are always applicable at all periods, whether of peace or of war. The land and malt have always been taken at 2,750,000*l.* there remains the lottery, which will not produce less than 200,000*l.* and the growing produce of the consolidated fund. I have stated these articles first, for reasons which will be obvious to the Committee. These are the ordinary resources. The growing produce of the consolidated fund would amount for one year to 2,100,000*l.* but in the course of the present year that produce will be affected by some heavy burdens—by the remains of charges in arrears; by the interest, if it is still to remain a burden upon us, on the Imperial loan; and by the growing interest on such parts of loans raised

on the credit of levying any tax, for which no interest has been provided. On the other hand, the growing produce will be swelled by the advantages to the planters of Grenada, amounting to 800,000*l*. I take, therefore, the probable growing produce of the consolidated fund, at 1,500,000*l*. In addition to this, and independently of the voluntary contributions, a tax was laid in the last session of Parliament upon the exports and imports, founded upon the peculiar situation of our trade as it then stood. That tax, Sir, has not only yielded to the full amount of what I estimated it at, but has even exceeded it; and I have the satisfaction of finding, that now, when that trade is brought to the test of a duty upon the declarations of the parties themselves, allowing them indulgences, and granting them a deduction of ten per cent., I have, I repeat, Sir, the satisfaction of stating, that the total amount of our exports and imports exceeds, in a large degree, the largest sum that any man ever yet ventured to state upon the subject. That duty I estimated to produce the sum of 1,200,000*l*. I have the best reason for believing that the actual produce of it will be much beyond that sum. In addition to this duty upon exports and imports, and which, as far as can be done without diminishing our resources, which must be contemplated with the greatest exultation, because they prove the extent of our commerce, in addition to that duty, now that the whole trade of the West Indies is centered in this country, a reduction may be made with advantage to the nation in the large sums paid upon drawbacks, and bounties upon exports. Into this subject, however, it is not my intention to enter at the present moment. I mention it, because it will make an increase to the tax upon exports and imports, which I have every reason to believe will amount, with that increase, to 1,700,000*l*. I have thus enumerated the principal articles :

The land and malt	£. 2,750,000
Lottery	200,000
The growing produce of the consolidated fund	1,500,000
The tax upon imports and exports	1,700,000
Total	£. 6,150,000

The remainder of the sum is that which must be raised either by a tax within the year, in the same manner as the assessed-tax bill of last year, or by a loan. It will be to be considered, how the Committee will divide that remaining sum between them: The sum to be provided for is upwards of twenty-three millions. Gentlemen will recollect, that in the debates upon the subject of the

assessed taxes last session, two fundamental principles were established as the rule by which we should be guided in providing for the supplies for the service of the year. These were, first, to reduce the total amount to be at present raised by a loan; and next, as far as it was not reducible, to reduce it to such a limit that no more loan should be raised than a temporary tax should defray within a limited time. In the first place, the tax acceded to by the House last session was for the purpose of providing for the supplies of the year; and in the next place, for the purpose of extinguishing the loan raised in that year. But from the different modifications that were made in the bill, and from the increased estimates of services, the whole amount to which it was limited, as a sinking fund, was confined to the sum of eight millions sterling. The original estimate of the sum was, as I have before said, necessarily diminished by the modifications; but in the course of the year, other means were forced to be adopted as substitutes for these modifications; the total sum, therefore, taken credit for in the act of appropriation for the amount of the assessed taxes, the voluntary contributions, and the duties on exports and imports, is no more than seven millions. In the estimate which I submitted to the Committee of Ways and Means, I stated the probable produce to be seven millions and a half. Sir, it is a satisfaction to me to think that, though many deductions have been made in the collection of the assessed taxes, from the latitude given to evasion, if not to fraud, yet that, nevertheless, with all these disadvantages, the total of the sum at which I stated the tax will be completely realized; and I have no doubt that the amount of the assessed taxes will be four millions. I estimated it at four millions and an half. Another sum, naturally, Sir, much more conjectural in its amount, has turned out different from the estimate on the other side of the account; and if, on the one hand, I did not calculate the possible evasions which the undue influence and latitude afforded by the bill would give rise to; if I did not foresee that many would take advantage of that influence, though under such circumstances of the country, and at such a moment; yet, on the other hand, I turn with pride and exultation to this striking contrast, that the sum which will have been produced by the voluntary contributions will amount, by the end of the year, including what has been received, not from this country, not from this island alone, but from all the dependencies of the country, which have shewn that they deserve the relation in which they stand to it, will have amounted, I say, Sir, by the end of the year, to the sum of two millions. Adding to these contributions the duties upon exports and imports, the total amount will be found to

be seven millions and a half. Satisfactory, however, as it is to me, to look at this: pleased as I am to contemplate the amount of the voluntary contributions, I believe it will be necessary for me to state, that though the general principle which we established last year has been confirmed as to its wisdom and policy, yet that more effectual measures must be adopted to meet the wishes and the interests of individuals, and to promote the real interests of the country. After all the various objections made to the measure last year, that which most dwelt upon the minds of those Members who had conceived no original objection to the principle of raising the supplies within the year, was the probable inequality of its operation, and the possibility of evasion and fraud. I felt it at that time to be my duty, if it were not possible to find out a measure capable of meeting all sorts of property, to take that which appeared to be the most practicable, and to go to the largest extent. I did feel it to be materially desirable rather to take some visible criterion of property, than to investigate the circumstances of individuals; yet I felt, Sir, that though I had taken the largest possible visible criterion, I had taken one which was not equal to the wealth and incomes of individuals. It has appeared that the general calculation was erroneous; that the means allowed for obtaining abatement, without the means of fresh inquiry, have led to a greater defalcation, not from the estimates produced, but from the real sum wanted, than was, I believe, in the contemplation of any person whatever, and though what we have all seen has confirmed us in the opinion of the necessity and wisdom of raising a large part of the supplies within the year; yet a view of all that has past, and the general opinion of the kingdom, will lead to the same conclusion, that some more effectual measures are absolutely necessary for the purpose of preventing those frauds and evasions, which, I am concerned to say, are, in some measure, disgraceful to the country, injurious to those individuals who have contributed their just proportion, and highly detrimental to the great object of gaining an ample supply within the year. I take it therefore as an established principle, that some measures are necessary to prevent those evasions, which, while they have left those who have shewn themselves the most honourable and fair to pay the full tenth of their incomes, have left many others of equal power and ability, to contribute much less, or perhaps not to contribute at all. If this is likely to be assented to, it will follow that such evasions can alone be corrected by a more specific declaration of income than under those loose provisions in the act of last session, and by furnishing such checks as may, as far as possible, ensure the accuracy of such specification. If this be necessary to

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correct the abuses of the tax of the last session, it is obvious that what is applicable to that measure is also applicable to another and a larger principle. If the means are devised, by which any individual, under the assessed taxes, can prove his claim to abatement, the same means will enable us to come at the knowledge of his income. If this be the case, and if every man feels that the evasions arising from the loose manner of allowing abatements are what constitute a crying grievance, he will also have the additional satisfaction of recollecting, that while the unpleasant duty is imposed upon him of enforcing the measure of last session, the same means will enable him not only to enforce, but to extend and improve it; that that which upon every ground of reasoning is of itself the greatest national benefit, but which has failed of producing those extensive benefits that were expected from it, may be carried not to the extent originally proposed, but as far beyond it as any man can desire for the present prosperity or future credit of the country. I wish, Sir, particularly to impress upon the minds of the Committee, that having found from experience, that we are compelled to devise fresh checks, we have found also that those same checks will enable us to impose a tax more equal, and more universal in its operation, and therefore more just and more productive—a tax upon the principle first in contemplation in the last session, to be imposed upon the whole of the leading branches of income. Sir, I am not sanguine enough to suppose, that any mode can be devised entirely to prevent evasions, or so perfect in its operation, that no inequality shall be complained of—All that we can have in view, and all that we can effect, is to approach as near this desirable end as we can. I trust, therefore, that the general opinion of the country and of the Committee will lead to the propriety of adopting some measure for the purpose of defraying either the whole or part of the supplies within the year, by a tax as equal in its operation and as extensive in its range as possible. I am aware, Sir, that the details of such a measure will require the most serious deliberation. What I now propose can only, as the Committee will see, be the leading features and the general outline of it. In doing this, I am desirous, in the first place, of stating as briefly and as accurately as I am able, all the principal points.

It will readily occur to every gentleman, that one of the first things in any discretionary measures to ascertain the amount of incomes, is to determine what species of commissioners shall be appointed to carry the act into execution. In doing this, I should conceive the Committee will have in view three principal objects. First, that the commissioners shall be persons as respectable in their

situation and rank in life, as independent of all real or imputed influence, and as likely to discharge the duties of their stations with ability and attention as possible. I believe, Sir, the Committee will be of opinion, that among the commissioners, from whose voluntary services in the different counties the country has derived such benefit, may be expected to be found men who will best answer the description I have just given. I believe, Sir, also, that a mode may be found out, both for original inquiry and for appeal in this new act, better than any that has hitherto been devised. I should propose, that all these commissioners should possess a certain qualification, that they should have property to an amount not less than 300*l.* a year; to these I should suggest the propriety of adding a certain number of persons resident in the different divisions who should possess the same qualification of 300*l.* a year—that such lists of commissioners should be referred to the two last Grand Juries for each county, who should select a proper number for each division, and a smaller number for appeals. In the great cities, and in great commercial places, some special provisions may be necessary. I state this, Sir, as a general principle, liable to subsequent and serious discussion. Supposing the commissioners to be appointed, the next shape in which the measure presents itself to our contemplation, is the manner of bringing before the commissioners the first view of the charge which each individual is to contribute, adopting it as a principle in the same manner as was done in the assessed-tax bill, that no persons whose incomes are under 60*l.* a year shall pay any thing. I propose that every person shall state what that sum is which he is willing to contribute, under a declaration, that what he so contributes is not less than one tenth part of his income. The difference between this and the former plan is, that instead of a treble and quadruple assessment, the first charge will be from the declarations of the parties themselves. If they are willing to pay it without a reference to what proportion it bears to their income, they may pay it. But the next point to be considered, is in what manner this declaration shall be checked and ascertained. With this view of the subject, knowing how difficult it is to ascertain the amount of a man's income, I do not think that the circumstance of whether that charge is or is not sufficient, should be left, in the first instance, to the commissioners; but that other means should be adopted of bringing that subject before them; and the way I should propose is not by any general public statement of income, but that it should be made the duty of some officers in each district to lay before the commissioners any grounds of doubt which they may entertain. These statements from indi-

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viduals, I propose, shall be sent to the surveyors of taxes, or some other officers appointed for that purpose, and that they shall only express their doubts, and the foundations of them; that then the commissioners shall call for farther explanation.

When we come to consider, Sir, what we have hitherto seen of the operation of the assessed-tax bill; when we recollect that much of the defalcation has arisen from the generality of the declarations required; that persons did not state from what sources their income was derived, or by what rules they calculated the amount of it; I say, Sir, when we consider these things, we must see that it has enabled persons who, if the naked fact were presented to them, would start from any thing deliberately false, to give in statements thus loose and vague. Yet amidst all these considerations, numerous and notorious as the evasions under the assessed-tax bill have been, it is still a ground for exultation and pride that the wealth and resources of the country have been proved to be so abundant. The check which I should propose in this new bill is, that when these grounds of doubt have been transmitted to the commissioners, they shall have the power of requiring a specification of income arising from the different branches, and according to the forms prescribed in a schedule to be annexed to the act. By requiring the blanks in this schedule to be filled up; by demanding an account of what income a man possesses under the various heads, whether it arises from lands, from a profession, or from trade; by presenting it in that definite form, a material check will be furnished, and abuses and evasions will be prevented. It will then remain with the commissioners to determine, whether they are satisfied; if they are not, I propose that they should be enabled to require another specification; I propose also to allow individuals to state in what they have been surcharged; when the day arrives for that examination, I should suggest, that an opportunity should be afforded to the commissioners to hear the surveyors of taxes, or other officers appointed, upon the grounds of doubts which they may have transmitted to the commissioners; to hear also any information from the party concerned; to receive any amendment which he may think proper to offer; and to examine such individuals as the commissioners shall think fit. But if they are not satisfied with the schedule delivered in, I should propose that they should have in that case the power to proceed to examinations by oath, but that there should be no compulsory power in them to make a man answer; that there should neither be any authority in them to call for books, or to examine any man's clerks or agents. If, however, the party withholds any information on these points, it shall rest with

commissioners to form any other opinion, and their judgement shall be final, unless the party chuses to appeal to the higher order of the commissioners. But even in that case I should suggest, that no books or papers should be examined; but that if the party is unwilling to produce those papers, he must acquiesce in the decision which the commissioners shall come to upon such other information as it may be in their power to obtain. I should propose farther, Sir, that no surcharge should be taken off, unless the parties make a full disclosure to the satisfaction of the commissioners.

This, I am perfectly ready to admit, gives to the commissioners considerable power. But I think, Sir, I have stated enough to shew to the Committee, that unless some such powers be afforded under this act, the real and substantial effect of the measure will be entirely defeated. I think, too, I have proved, that commissioners, selected in the manner I have described, are as likely to be as free from all undue influence, and to act with as much integrity and honour, as any other set of men whatever. If, however, a better mode should be suggested, so far from opposing it, I shall consider it as a melioration and improvement of my plan. With respect to the information which may be communicated to the commissioners, I should propose that they shall be strictly sworn not to disclose such information, nor to avail themselves of it for any other purpose separate from the execution of the act. If any statement, however, should be made upon oath, which the commissioners shall think to be false, and which they may wish to bring to a trial, it must be obvious to the Committee that then there ought to be afforded the means of carrying on a prosecution for perjury. But on no other ground should there be any disclosure of facts by the commissioners, or any of the other officers appointed to carry the act into execution.

Having said thus much, Sir, having laid down these general principles and outlines, I cannot feel, that if commissioners of the description I have alluded to can be found, bound to execute their duty fairly and impartially, and sworn to secrecy; I say, if such men can be selected, I cannot feel, however strong the objections may be against the disclosure of circumstances, that any statement made to such commissioners is liable to the general objection against public disclosures of the incomes and circumstances of individuals in a commercial country—at least, Sir, I am sure there is every disposition in the plan to guard against it. There is little danger, I conceive, that such commissioners will act partially, or will conduct themselves vexatiously; and, in my opinion, there does not remain any fair ground for jealousy in individuals, that a disclosure

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to such men will give to persons in the same line of life any advantages over them.

Perhaps, however, Sir, there is one class of men to whom it may be for the Committee to consider whether the measure shall extend, and whether they ought not to remain exceptions to the act. Among the descriptions of persons to whom it may remain for the Committee to consider whether a disclosure would not be detrimental, is the class which includes the poorest persons engaged in mercantile concerns: a class whose gains are most precarious, whose credit may be most doubtful, and most injured by a disclosure; I speak of the persons engaged in retail trades, to whom the assessed-tax bill of last session gave great indulgencies, considering that the relief of abatement was one of which they could not avail themselves, without greater inconvenience and injury to them, perhaps, than to persons of higher rank, and of a higher description of mercantile traders. I wish, therefore, the Committee to consider whether it may not be as well to leave that class to pay on the mitigated rate of assessment to which they are liable under the assessed-tax bill, than to subject them to the general rate of the present bill. It will also naturally enter into the consideration of the Committee, what allowances or exemptions ought to be extended to other descriptions of persons. In the last act, certain allowances and abatements were granted to persons with large families. That principle it will certainly be proper to extend to this measure; and the only doubt which I entertain upon the subject is, whether it was carried far enough in the bill of last year. If this suggestion be admitted, it will naturally be a matter of doubt, whether the principle in the last bill, with respect to persons having no families, ought not to be extended. It will also very reasonably occur to the minds of the Committee, that it is of the utmost importance to the due execution of the act, that as far as the general principles can be laid down for establishing a rate of landed property, or what may be the proper average of incomes which are subject to average, that the rates in the last act should be subject to correction and improvement. By the operation of these powers, and by the influence of these rules, we may expect to arrive more nearly at that fair proportion which each man ought to contribute towards the exigencies, and for the service of the country.

The next consideration to which I wish to direct the attention of the Committee, is one liable to more difficulty and doubt, upon which gentlemen will be aware that every thing must be conjectural, but in which we are still not without lights to guide us—I mean as to the probable amount of a tax of this kind. The Com-

mittee must be convinced, that what I shall state will be with doubt and uncertainty. I shall, however, submit to the view of the House the information I have collected, the authorities with which I am fortified, and the grounds upon which I proceed. And first, Sir, I shall proceed to state what is the first great object of income. I mean the property derived from land. Upon this point I have consulted the best opinions, and authors of the most acknowledged merit. Upon the subject of the rent of the land of this country, Sir William Petty is the earliest author whom I have consulted, but upon whom I shall not dwell much. At the time he wrote, the rent of land was stated at eight millions. In a subsequent period, in the beginning of this century, and in the reign of Queen Anne, two writers of credit, Davenant and King, represented the rent of land to be 14,000,000l. However they differed on other points, on this they both agreed. Posterior to that time it was a received opinion, that a land-tax of four shillings in the pound was equivalent to about two shillings of what would be collected on the real rents of the kingdom, which were stated to amount to twenty millions. Full twenty years ago this was said by a writer, who was also a Member of this House, and who, in a work he wrote, expressly recommended the very principle which I have submitted to the Committee this day. The same estimate was stated, and the same opinion was countenanced by the authority of the celebrated author of the Treatise on the Wealth of Nations, Adam Smith. He received it as a statement generally admitted, and sufficiently proved, that the rent of the land in the kingdom was twenty millions yearly. In a work published as long ago as the year 1774, Mr. Arthur Young, who had made agricultural pursuits his study, has advanced the same opinion. I mention all these authorities, to shew what has been the amount of the rent of land at different periods. I state them also to shew how great has been the increase upon it within the last ten years; but if any of those authorities should still not be free from exaggeration, the Committee will at least see that any estimate which I may make is not likely to be one which is much beyond probability. I have had also, Sir, the advantage of other inquiries made expressly by a body who have made the cultivation of the land their peculiar province—I mean the Board of Agriculture. I allude more particularly to one report published by a person who made this part of the subject his study, the report drawn up by Mr. Middleton. All these, checked with other examinations, state the whole amount of the cultivated land of the country to amount to little less than forty millions of acres. Any attempt to state what is the average value of these

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forty millions of acres, must be, the Committee will see, in its nature extremely uncertain. As far as the inquiries I have made have enabled me to obtain any information, I find that many persons most conversant upon the subject, believe the average value to be fifteen shillings per acre. I shall, however, take it at no more than twelve shillings and six-pence. In doing this, perhaps, I am rather under the mark, but I will put the average value at twenty-five millions a year. And gentlemen surely will see, that when I take the number of acres at forty millions, and the average value at only twelve shillings and six-pence per acre, the result is only an increase of five millions beyond what it was twenty years ago, and that therefore I cannot be considered as a very sanguine calculator. However, in this part of the subject, I desire the Committee to bear in mind, that it will be proper to propose a reduction for all under 60*l.* a year, and that the same modifications be admitted into this act as in the assessed-tax bill—I mean the scale of income from 60*l.* to 200*l.* a year, and rising from a hundred and twentieth part to a tenth. I mean on this account to assume a deduction of one-fifth, and to state the taxable property at only twenty millions.

I shall next proceed to state that part of income from land which belongs to the tenant. I propose to value every man according to his rent, making only a deduction for repairs. What I shall suggest for the farther consideration of the Committee, is three-fourths of the rack rent which the tenant pays to the landlord. The value of the income from land which belongs to the tenant I take at nineteen millions: the income to the landlord, as I have before said, at twenty-five millions. Instead of deducting only one-fifth, as I have suggested with respect to the landlord, I shall propose with respect to the tenant, to deduct two-thirds, leaving five millions as the taxable property of the tenants. The next income arising from land, is an income which is received neither by the landlord, nor by the tenant—I mean what is received from tithes. This is an income enjoyed, as the Committee know, either by lay impropriators, or by the clergy. The statements of the amount of the tithes are different; but I estimate the value of them to be five millions. If gentlemen suppose the amount of the cultivated land in the country to be forty millions of acres, and the average value to be twenty-five millions, they will find, I believe, my valuation to be very moderate: it is also Mr. Arthur Young's statement. Upon this subject of tithes, I propose to allow a deduction of one-fifth, though, perhaps, I may be considered as stating the reduction

too largely ; but gentlemen will consider the allowance to be made for poor livings.

Another species of property is that which arises from mines, and from shares in canals. There is also another property which I have not included in the rents of land, I mean the property arising from the sale of timber. I take all these three, the mines, canals, and timber, at three millions.

Another species of rent is that received for Houses. I propose to proceed upon the rate which was followed in the act of last session. The Committee are aware, that to establish accurately the rent of houses has ever been found to be impracticable, particularly of houses of the higher description of rent, which have always been undervalued. Out of the number of 700,000 houses, 250,000 are calculated to pay to the assessed taxes ; I shall therefore take the rent of houses at no more than six millions.

In the early statements to which I have alluded, the profits gained by the professors of the law alone are stated at one million and a half ; I cannot suppose that they are at all diminished. Allowing, besides, for all the branches of the medical profession, I conceive that two millions is a very small sum as the amount of the incomes arising from the professions.

The next head of income relates to the profits of retail trade : but there are persons of a certain description with respect to whom it will be necessary to make some allowance. The reduction I shall propose to take at one eighth of the net sum of the profits of the trade of Great Britain, after which there will remain a sum of 5,000,000*l.* applicable to the general operation of the tax.

There will then remain another article of taxation, which is the income spent in this country by persons who derive it from other parts of the world ; and unquestionably all who reside in this kingdom, and draw their means from sources out of it, cannot be dissatisfied at contributing to their own support and protection. Of this description, the only persons I shall think it necessary to estimate are those whose incomes arise from their having property in Ireland, and who reside in this country, and persons owning estates in the West Indies, or receiving the interest of mortgages on estates in that part of the world. With respect to those persons whose incomes arise from Ireland, I have no accurate data in order to estimate the amount ; but I believe it is the generally received opinion, that the property of persons of this description amounted to at least 1,000,000*l.* a considerable time since, and now, from the increase of rents, it may reasonably be estimated far beyond that

sum. With respect to the incomes of estates in the West Indies, the total amount cannot be estimated at less than 7,000,000*l.* sterling, and far the greater amount is produced from the property of persons residing in Great Britain, who either own estates, or have mortgages upon them for which they receive interest. From that are to be deducted the amount of the exports carried out, and the charge of cultivating the estates in the West-Indies; after which deduction, I estimate the produce of income in the West Indies at four millions, and I believe I run no danger of stating it too high. Thus it appears I may fairly estimate at five millions the whole produce of income arising beyond seas, and enjoyed by persons in this country.

I next come to the income arising from personal estates, or from the capital employed in trade, which in some is possessed in a greater degree than by others. With respect to persons of this description, public or private, there can be no difference: and with respect to those whose incomes arise from mortgages, I can state no separate sum, for whatever interest is received by individuals, on the security of estates, is included in the general estimate of 25,000,000*l.*

On one species of income, there will be no difference of opinion; I mean that arising from capital vested in the public funds. When any discussion has taken place in consequence of any notion loosely thrown out, that a tax on the public funds would be adopted, no man was ever more prepared with his determined opposition than myself; and on this plain, simple, and decided ground, that to propose a tax operating exclusively on that description of income, the profits of a capital borrowed by Government, would be a breach of that sanction under which it was lent. That to make the persons who had lent it indirectly the subject of a tax, when other species of property were allowed to escape, would be inconsistent with that good faith which Government had held forth as the inducement to individuals to repose confidence in its measures, and to rely that the money they had embarked for the service of the public should not be diminished by partial taxation. But at a time like the present, when a tax is raising on every species of capital, on landed estates, on mortgage, money embarked in adventures of trade, or in any other way whatever, in which men withdrawing their money from the public funds could apply it, in such case the man of funded property can have no objection to a tax on the same terms with others. We have the same right to object to any defalcation of our property, as he has to object to a diminution of what the Government promised to secure him. I mention this, not because I think it requires an argument, that because it is important to state, that the principle of

taking the public funds in the way now proposed, is distinct and independent of all those ideas of a separate tax, which with justice would come under the description of an exclusive resumption of that which the public had agreed to pay. Having said this, I have only to state the amount of the interest of the public funds, after a deduction which I make with great satisfaction, as, though it is one which nominally falls as a charge on the public, is in fact an object of great resource, I mean that proportion of dividends which is appropriated to Commissioners, and constitutes a part of the sinking fund. This deduction is first the original 1,000,000*l.* granted to the Commissioners, the amount of 1 per cent. which makes 2,000,000*l.* more, and the value of the dividends of the stock already purchased, which is near another million. After these deductions, there will then remain near 15,000,000*l.* constituting the dividends of individuals possessing funded property, from which I propose to deduct a part, namely, from persons whose incomes are below 200*l.* and below 60*l.* the whole, which leaves a sum of 12,000,000*l.* to be subject to the operation of the tax.

Another species of property, on the first view, appears more than any other incapable of taxation, and which I must in many respects leave to be judged of by the experiment, I mean the profits of trades. Certainly as to many branches of this kind of income, there are considerable difficulties; but this consideration renders the probability of a tax upon the produce of trade being in the greatest degree productive; it is, that our trade has become great and flourishing. We have by circumstances partly accidental derived peculiarly the means of availing ourselves of a tax on a part of our trade which has increased to a pitch till lately unknown—I mean our foreign trade. We have had laid before us an account of the exports and imports, the amount of which not resting on loose estimates, formed, as in earlier periods they had used to be, arbitrarily and capriciously, but corrected by minute inquiry made in the course of the year, and information obtained from that source to which I have alluded in what I have stated to the Committee—I mean the declaration of parties under the tax on exports and imports passed last year; and we find they are now much larger than they were ever before estimated at. Besides this criterion, we have another way of getting at the amount of the exports and imports, which is by the tax imposed on property insured; and it appears from a review of this tax, that for the last two years, since which time the tax has had complete operation, that the total amount of the exports and imports is not less than 80 millions sterling, that is, of articles insured. This amount, by a comparison with the one ascertained

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by the tax on exports and imports, nearly corresponds. There is, however, one circumstance which may induce a supposition that this estimate is underated, which is, the considerable foreign trade carried on by parties who adventure on their own risque. But estimate the whole at 80,000,000*l*. The next article on which I propose the tax to operate, is the profit derived from this capital, in estimating what we are to consider, not merely the profit of those who buy and sell; not merely the profit of the manufacturer who sells to the merchant, or the merchant who sells on his own account; but the profit of those who export on account of others. By this I allude to the indirect and collateral profits of brokers, and other incidental profits that belong to that mode of carrying on trade. It was on this branch of profit I rested my opinion, when I supposed the profits of trade were no less on an average than 15 per cent. If we observe how many branches there are, how many persons make their profit of articles of trade, it is not to be supposed that the income on this species of property can be less than 12,000,000*l*.

There then remains a species of income which much more than any other baffles a conjecture; I mean the profits of the whole of the domestic trade of the country. When we consider how diversified this head of income is, how many make a profit of different articles from the raw material to the last stage of finished manufacture—what profits are made not only by the retail trader, but by those in a higher and more opulent line; when we consider all these, it is difficult to form any perfect estimate; but in forming the leading feature of the tax, I have stated that the general capital employed in exports and imports is supposed to be 80,000,000*l*. sterling, of these, the exports of British manufacture alone, resulting from the increase of our trade, fall not short of 30,000,000*l*. sterling. Now if that be the value of the manufactures we export, I think, on a subject so doubtful to form an estimate upon as this is, no gentleman conversant in the business of our manufactures, such as woollen, cotton, iron, hardware, and other branches, who will ask himself what proportion he supposes the home consumption to bear to the foreign exports, but will estimate it at four times above what we export, which, according to every fair inquiry on the subject cautiously made, I believe is the proportion; and this calculation makes the articles of British manufacture for home consumption to amount to 120,000,000*l*. Supposing the gain upon them to be put at no more than fifteen per-cent. without allowing for all the intermediate profits of the persons through whose hands they went, which I should estimate at ten per cent. there would arise a sum of eighteen millions on those articles. Besides this,

there would remain the farther consideration of the profits arising from the several lucrative branches of business, and those in which artizans are engaged—I mean breweries, distilleries, and concerns of that nature, with the profits made by architects, masons, and artificers of those descriptions, which pervade every country. With respect to this head of income, I conceive I have nothing to guide me even of the same conjectural kind, as in the last instance, but I may reasonably estimate it at a sum not less than 10,000,000*l.* which, together with what I stated as to the amount of the home articles, makes a sum of 20,000,000*l.* There may be other branches of income which I have not particularized, but I only wished to state the general sources of the wealth of the country, and in this view I am inclined to suppose, that the tax on the income of these sources, according to such data as I can collect, can hardly be put at less than as operating on 102,000,000*l.*, after allowing for all deductions. I shall, for the convenience of the Committee, enumerate the different articles making up this amount: they are as follow, after allowing for the necessary deductions:

The amount of the rent on land possessed by landlords	— — —	£. 20,000,000
The amount of land in the hands of tenants		5,000,000
The amount of tithes	— —	4,000,000
The amount of mines and shares in canals, timber, &c.		3,000,000
Amount of the rent of houses	— —	6,000,000
Amount of the income arising from professions		2,000,000
The amount of the produce on the above articles in Scotland	— — —	5,000,000
Amount of income of absentees from Ireland		1,000,000
Amount of income from the West Indies	—	4,000,000
Amount of interest of funds	— — —	12,000,000
Amount of profit on foreign trade	—	12,000,000
Profit on home trade	— —	28,000,000
		£. 102,000,000

In the last articles there are no deductions, because, I suppose, there will not be thought the least necessity for any, as the trade will be in opulent hands. The total is put at one hundred and two millions; and I therefore hope I may consider myself justified in the expectation, that no less a sum than 10,000,000*l.* is likely to be produced, from a tax of this description, if fairly collected.

Now, supposing that ten millions is the sum thus collected, gen-

members will recollect, that in the last session of Parliament, the assessed taxes were the only part of the public resources, which were mortgaged for the sum of 8,000,000*l.* borrowed for the public service in 1797. I should think it my duty, therefore, that the sum now proposed to be raised in lieu of the assessed taxes should, after its appropriation to the supplies of the present year, remain as a pledge for the discharge of that sum for which the assessed taxes were a security, and also for the discharge of the loan of the present year, beyond what will be paid out of the sinking fund. Taking the assessed taxes at four millions, they would have been mortgaged for two years after peace—and thus the advantage of this measure is this, that no greater sums will be raised on any individuals than those which have been hitherto paid, at least by such as have rendered the measure of the Legislature effectual; they will be relieved of a greater than a proportional share of their burden, and the duration of the burden will not be half the time. This is a recommendation of the justice and expediency which must be felt by the people at large. But it does not stop here; it looks anxiously to the alleviation of the burdens of the country, by a great temporary exertion; it looks to the equality of the tax, and the general efficacy of the measure, conscious that on them depend our success in the great cause in which we are engaged. That it is to furnish the means of providing for the debt created in two years, within the same period we formerly provided for the debt created in one. In the mode of applying the sum now to be raised, there are different ways—the sum which the assessed taxes were applied to discharge last year amounted to eight millions; it would be only to borrow a sum equal to the debt to supply the deficiency; but it occurs, however, to me, that a more simple and direct mode is, to apply this sum, in the first instance, to the supplies of the year, but at the same time to enact, that the tax shall continue till it has discharged the debt for which the assessed taxes were mortgaged, and then to make a farther charge for what may be borrowed beyond what the sinking fund will discharge.

Supposing this ten per cent. on income produces 10,000,000*l.* the period when I should propose it to take effect would be the 5th of April next. I should propose the repeal of the former assessed taxes at the same period; but from the calculation I have made, four millions and an half will be raised from the first of February, 1798, to the first of February, 1799. It would, therefore, be more beneficial to the object I have in view to commence the operation of this new measure at an earlier period, because of the benefit of the increased rate of taxation; but there will be the addition of

what will come in under the assessed taxes, which will amount to 700,000*l*. Thus there will be raised 10,700,000*l*. But this is not applicable to the whole of the subject; for gentlemen will recollect, that the interest of the 8,000,000 pounds was also charged on the assessed taxes. The interest will continue in the course of the present year, to which also is to be added the interest of whatever loan may be made this year. This will amount to about one million five hundred thousand pounds which leaves the sum of nine million two hundred thousand pounds, as applicable to the services of the present year. This aid would be all that is necessary to furnish the ways and means for the supplies, except as to the sum of twenty-four millions. Fourteen millions, therefore, is the sum necessary to be raised by loan, of which, however, four millions and a half is discharged by the operation of the sinking fund, consequently nine millions and a half is the whole sum to be added to the national debt. I wish, therefore, to lay this down as a principle, that nine millions and a half is the sum to be raised this year, for which I should propose to charge as a mortgage the income tax, after discharging the former mortgage. This gives a general view of the amount of the services of the year, and the ways and means to defray them. I have also stated, to the best of my power, the possible amount of every article proposed as the subject of taxation.

I am almost inclined to think it necessary to endeavour to convince the Committee of the propriety and advantage of adhering to the general principle of the measure adopted last session of Parliament, and now proposed to be extended. If we have seen the advantages of that principle, imperfect as its execution was in comparison to the one I now submit, the Committee will find something better than reason to induce them to adhere to it—they will find that their own experience decides in its favour. Among all the various circumstances in which resides the hopes of our enemies abroad, of all the causes that chiefly aggravated the fears of those who were most depending at home, there was none which more forcibly operated than the hopes on the one hand, and the fears on the other, of increasing our funded debt. It was not so much the power, enmity, or extravagance of the enemy that excited apprehension, that we should trust to the usual resources of the country till they failed; and that no others could be substituted in their place, without danger and mischief resulting from them. We have, however, had the satisfaction of knowing, that now, under the accumulated burdens of protracted war, after a period of six years of arduous contest, after events alarming to the public credit of the kingdom, we have seen

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after all this, the country on a sudden rousing herself, and adopting new means of vigour and exertion, distinguishing herself, and surpassing the proudest period of the British history. We have seen the credit of the country and its pretensions to superiority in the affairs of Europe restored in a manner equal to the just expectations and well-grounded confidence of those who depended on her strength. We have seen the despondency of those who feared the worst defeated, and the hopes of those who thought for the best, realized by a succession of events which are the peculiar bounty of Providence. We have had the happiness of becoming instrumental in producing the glorious change which has taken place; but let it be recollected that it is not those events which are the most dazzling and striking, that, perhaps, have had the largest share in producing the favourable change in the situation and prospects of the country. The achievements of your armies; the glorious proofs of the prowess of your fleets, adding to that fame which they have acquired in the course of centuries, are, indeed, never ceasing themes for every Englishman; it is subjects such as these which ought to be contemplated with enthusiasm, as actions truly great and valuable to the country, as they point out the reliance to be placed in the energy and determination of Englishmen. It is actions such as we have displayed, that shew in broad and glowing colours the effect of valour and conduct, animated by a love of our country, and every laudable passion that can inspire the breasts of men. The merit of these services is truly great. It is true that the achievements of our fleets have chiefly produced the change in our situation, as well as the rest of Europe. It is true all this is to be ascribed to the secrecy and vigilance displayed in our naval departments, the disposition of our maritime strength: but they are to be ascribed more immediately to the transcendent, the unequalled abilities, intrepidity and skill of our commanders, to whose merits I cannot do justice. There has been shewn a degree of fervent zeal, of perseverance, of ardour, of resolution on the part of British seamen, by which their character is raised in the estimation of the world. But while this valour and activity have averted the impending storm from a large part of Europe, and have prevented its gathering round us, while it has produced the immediate salvation of some of the powers of the Continent, and afforded the means of deliverance to others; while we are justly elated at having brought about these great events, do not let us forget that the power of employing such a force, after we had so long continued the contest, as has enabled us to strike the blow we have, is to be attributed to the circumstance of our possessing the pecuniary resources neces-

fary to furnish that force. The resources for our national defence have arisen from the firmness and inflexible perseverance of Parliament; from the zeal, magnanimity and decision in promoting the public interest, which have characterized all classes of British subjects. They have had the satisfaction of being instrumental in the salvation of themselves and the rest of the world, and of vindicating their insulted honour. We have been enabled to do so by the energy and the determination of the British Parliament, which has called forth the real radical strength of the country; which has endeavoured, as far as possible, to make all men instrumental in their own safety; which has suffered no difficulties to deter us; which has not only contrived that the services of the people should be voluntary, but that their zeal should accompany them; which has asked from all orders of men that salvage which is due for rescuing them from the greatest danger that ever threatened them. We have seen a mercantile country, actuated by those sentiments which the people of all mercantile countries are, from their habits, supposed to possess, arm themselves for the defence of their country. We have happily seen them, without any diminution of that mercantile spirit which furnishes their resources, display the noblest instances of magnanimity, and persons from whose situations and habits it would least have been expected, shew a degree of military zeal and enthusiasm which has given us all the advantages of a military nation, without any diminution of those other advantages which are more felt than cherished among us. We now know our pretensions, and what we may expect from a just perseverance; we know, that although some had doubts whether we could continue the war, that we have continued it with more success than ever, and that we are still able to continue it, with our means improved. What would have been our situation, if, instead of acting the part we have, we had purchased the means of obtaining peace by the sacrifice of our commerce or capital, and the industry of our country? I must believe there is not a man who would be disposed to question the policy of the conduct which we have adopted. When we have the satisfaction of knowing that by performing our duty we have consulted our immediate interest as much as our permanent security; we can have no hesitation in adhering to the same line of conduct, and of following up that system which has been productive of so much benefit. I hardly believe that it can be necessary to enter into much detail; it is enough to state, that notwithstanding the wealth of the country, it is necessary we should have recourse to other means of raising the supplies than those formerly resorted to. By the measure you have already adopted, you

have convinced the enemy, yourselves, and the world, that you are equal to continue the struggle as long as your safety requires it. This is enough to reconcile every British mind to the necessity of repeating and extending a measure, which alone affords a hope of bringing to a termination a contest, in which every thing dear to Englishmen is at stake. I should feel that in every point of prudence you are called upon, out of regard to your own interest, the interest of future times, to sanction and give vigour to such a measure. I shall not now go over the same ground as in the preceding session of Parliament, as to the ultimate economy of raising within the year so large a portion of the supplies. It is enough that it is evident that whatever you borrowed under the old system was attended with three-fold the expence more than by the mode now presented. If, in addition to the great political consequences of such a measure, it is also peculiarly advantageous to many parts of the community, this will add to the arguments in its favour. It will be advantageous to the stockholder, by preventing the depreciation of the funds—its advantages are common to the landholder, to whose detriment the depreciation of the funds must necessarily operate—it applies no less in favour of the manufacturer, who of course must be attached to a system by which his income becomes greater and more permanent in consequence of its effect on the general prosperity of the kingdom by a just and well-administered system of finance. But if we were not to consider the general system of finance, but merely the effect of the measure of last year, we would be persuaded of the necessity of the present one, unless we shut our eyes to what passes in the world at the eventful period in which we live. If we look forward to the termination of the present war, or if, from the contemplation of former periods of history, for the last hundred, fifty, or forty years, we have but too just reason to expect a renewal of hostilities within a short period; surely the adoption of a system which held out the only prospect of alleviating the burdens of war, and consequently can only lead to peace for ourselves and posterity, ought not to admit of hesitation. We have only to look to any future war—to a period of six years hostilities, and I think there is not that landed gentleman, or stockholder, or merchant, or manufacturer who could be able to pay ten per cent. to the prosecution of the war, provided the supplies were to be raised according to the old method. The continuation of a war for six years, supported by such means, would render a tax equal to the one now proposed permanent for forty years. Having stated, in a political and economical point of view, how this measure must operate to the salvation of Europe, and the permanent advan-

tage of England, we may judge what would be the effect of raising the supplies wholly by loans, without raising a great portion of them within the year.

He then proceeded to expatiate on the advantages we should now have enjoyed if our predecessors had adopted the plan now resorted to, of raising a considerable part of the supplies within the year. In such event, he said, we should have found that the annual sum now obliged to be raised would be less by several millions; and viewing it in that light, it would be ungenerous to let the burden pass on to posterity. But it was not necessary now to enter into nice calculations, to prove the superiority of a situation resulting from the early adoption of such a measure. If by acting upon it now, we found we were insuring our safety, and providing for our defence, that we were establishing a wise and useful principle of economy, and laying a foundation for our future glory and the relief of posterity; these would be considerations sufficient to recommend it to those who, unactuated by selfish views, carried their ideas beyond their own times, and did not meanly seek to shift the burden they should uphold to the shoulders of those who were to come after them. These arguments would be sufficient, therefore, to direct us. We were not, in the election of the course to be pursued, determining for ourselves only: the deliberations of the English Parliament were not more interesting to the people of England than to all the nations of Europe. It was from that House they waited to receive the signal by which they were to shape their course. It was from England they derived the only hope of safety and support; it was by her aid alone those who had not fallen expected to maintain their independence, or those that had sunk beneath the power of France could be restored; in short, we were considered the only people capable of arresting that torrent which, in the opinion of the wisest men, endangered the safety of all other nations, and threatened to overwhelm them in ruin. When, therefore, the interests of themselves and their posterity, of England, and also of all other nations are at stake, he was confident that, after the difficulties they had already encountered, they would not shrink from the present arduous crisis, or resign those titles to pre-eminence, for which they had been already so celebrated, and which were the pride and glory of all those who had the honour of calling themselves subjects of Great Britain. On these grounds, therefore, he would propose a set of resolutions on the plan which he had submitted to their consideration.

“ Resolved,

“ That it is the opinion of this Committee, that so much of an act made in the last session of Parliament, intitled, “ An Act for

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granting to His Majesty an aid and contribution for the Prosecution of the War," as charges any person with an additional duty in proportion to the amount of the rates or duties to which, prior to the 5th day of April, 1798, such person was assessed according to any assessment made in pursuance of any act of Parliament in force at the time of passing the said act of the last session, be repealed.

" Resolved,

" That it is the opinion of this Committee, that towards raising the supply granted to His Majesty, there be charged annually, during a term to be limited, the several rates and duties following, upon all income arising from property in *Great Britain*, belonging to any of His Majesty's subjects, although not resident in *Great Britain*; and upon all income of every person residing in *Great Britain*, and of every body politic or corporate, or company, fraternity, or society of persons, whether corporate or not corporate, in *Great Britain*, whether any such income shall arise from lands, tenements, or hereditaments, wheresoever the same shall be situated in *Great Britain*, or elsewhere; or from any kind of personal property, or other property whatever; or from any profession, office, employment, trade, or vocation; that is to say,

One one-hundred-and-twentieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 60*l.* per annum, and shall be under 65*l.* per annum.

One ninety-fifth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 65*l.* but shall be under 70*l.*

One seventieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 70*l.* but shall be under 75*l.*

One sixty-fifth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 75*l.* but shall be under 80*l.*

One sixtieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 80*l.* but shall be under 85*l.*

One fifty-fifth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 85*l.* but shall be under 90*l.*

One fiftieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 90*l.* but shall be under 95*l.*

One forty-fifth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 95*l.* but shall be under 100*l.*

One fortieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 100*l.* but shall be under 105*l.*

One thirty-eighth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 105*l.* but shall be under 110*l.*

One thirty-sixth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 110*l.* but shall be under 115*l.*

One thirty-fourth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 115*l.* but shall be under 120*l.*

One thirty-second part of such income, if the same shall amount to 120*l.* but shall be under 125*l.*

One thirtieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 125*l.* but shall be under 130*l.*

One twenty-eighth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 130*l.* but shall be under 135*l.*

One twenty-sixth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 135*l.* but shall be under 140*l.*

One twenty-fourth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 140*l.* but shall be under 145*l.*

One twenty-second part of such income, if the same shall amount to 145*l.* but shall be under 150*l.*

One twentieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 150*l.* but shall be under 155*l.*

One nineteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 155*l.* but shall be under 160*l.*

One eighteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 160*l.* but shall be under 165*l.*

One seventeenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 165*l.* but shall be under 170*l.*

One sixteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 170*l.* but shall be under 175*l.*

One fifteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 175*l.* but shall be under 180*l.*

One fourteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 180*l.* but shall be under 185*l.*

One thirteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 185*l.* but shall be under 190*l.*

One twelfth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 190*l.* but shall be under 195*l.*

One eleventh part of such income, if the same shall amount to 195*l.* but shall be under 200*l.*

And one tenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 200*l.* or upwards.

Mr. TIERNEY then rose and said:—After the very eloquent conclusion of the right honourable gentleman's speech, the Committee might well expect that nothing comparatively worthy of their attention could be heard from me; and it is not with any

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hope that they should think me worth any attention when compared to him in eloquence, that I rise. I feel, as much as any man can feel for me, in what I do upon the present occasion; the object of which is, to shew a desire to resist the effect of what has been offered to the passions of the Committee; and which I should not attempt, did I not feel myself impelled by a sense of duty. I agree with the right honourable gentleman, that the decision of this House to-night, is not only interesting to England, but also to all Europe; it is because I agree with him upon that, I am so desirous of delivering a few sentiments; but how unworthy soever I may be of receiving the favourable attention of the Committee on this important subject, yet I should be sorry that such sentiments as he has uttered to-night should go forth to the world as the unanimous sentiments of the British House of Commons.

I did not mean to say any thing this night on the subject before the Committee, because I thought the right honourable gentleman meant only to state the subject of a tax upon income, and that the ample detail of it was to have been reserved to a future day; that he was not to go into the subject so much at length as he has done to-night; and therefore, I confess, I am not prepared to contend with him, for without preparation I do not pretend to be able at any time to contend with him. There are, however, some observations which I am now ready to make. On the supply there is one thing which occurs to me, at the first glance of this business, which is, that, supposing we have only one budget this year, and that we have heard already of the whole of the supply, it will then, as they stand, exceed by more than two millions the sum voted for the last year. I know that, on this occasion, the right honourable gentleman may say, that this year he has had better means of forming his calculations on the articles of expenditure, as well as various other events. But if he should so tell me, and promise solemnly not to ask for more money in the course of the session, and yet afterwards demand a great deal, it would not surprize me, for it would not be the first time; but, however, I hope he will keep his word, and that the People of England shall not, in 1798, be twice burdened for 1799.

With regard to what the right honourable gentleman has said with respect to the sinking fund, I have nothing to say against it; neither have I any thing to say against the tax imposed in the last session of Parliament upon Imports and Exports, which is commonly called the Convoy Tax. He assures us, that they will produce one million seven hundred thousand pounds; and he alleges, that he has some regulations that will be of public utility

in that particular ; against none of these points have I any thing to urge. Leaving, then, all these points, I come to the great one which is now before us—I mean the tax upon Income ; upon which the right honourable gentleman expects either support or silence from this side of the House, for so his address to the Committee to-night indicated. To this I answer, he cannot expect support ; he can hardly expect silence from me ; because, having opposed the assessed taxes as I did, it would be strange that I should be silent upon a measure, which is, in my opinion, infinitely more destructive, even than that destructive measure. But that is not all ; for I consider what the effect is of this House agreeing to any principle laid down by that right honourable gentleman. This House agreed last year to the principle laid down by him in his assessed taxes, but the House had not then the idea of going the length which he now proposes ; they thought the whole measure had better been abandoned altogether, than that it should cause the disclosure of the condition of every person in the kingdom. I know these were not the words used by any Member in the House, but they do not contain more than the sense and feeling of the House last year when that subject was under discussion ; and something like the words was very current from this side of the House ; but now the Minister, having got the House to recognize the principle of his assessed taxes, is emboldened, and goes a step farther, and proposes, that the House should follow him ; that proposition the Committee have now before them, and I will venture to alledge, that even he, confident as he was in the majority that has always supported him, would not have ventured, last year, to have laid before this House the monstrous proposition which is now before us. But he says, “ You need not make any disclosure of your condition in life.” What then ? If the disclosure I do make be not satisfactory, has not the Commissioner power to increase the duty on me according to his discretion ? and all these proceedings are to depend upon the evidence of an infamous informer. By such evidence, and in such a way, Commissioners are to tax us at their option. They are to say, from such sources of information, what the respectable merchant of the city of London shall contribute to the defence of the State ; unless he chuses to disclose, to the satisfaction of an informer, the whole condition of his affairs. To such a proposition I cannot assent. But that is not all ; for if this House agrees to that proposition now, is it too much to say upon experience, if this tax does not come up to the system, a general disclosure of all property must take place, and that too in the course of the very next year ? I say, does not experience warrant us in coming to that conclusion ?

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I took the liberty, last year, of opposing the measure now before the Committee under another name, and with a less disagreeable aspect than it bears at present. That measure was, in appearance, less disagreeable than this ; by that, a man was, in some measure, allowed to withdraw from luxury ; but here there is nothing of the kind allowed in any shape. I opposed that measure, because I thought it, as I do still, very oppressive. I said it was a tax on income ; the answer was, that it was not a tax on income, but that it was the best mode of coming at property to support the State. This seems to be a bolder measure ; for it puts a tenth of the property of England in requisition—a measure which the French have followed, in the career of their revolutionary rapine, and which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has, with all his eloquence, justly branded with the hardest epithets ; only it is a little unfortunate that he should imitate what he took so much pains to render detestable.

Another reason I have for opposing this measure is, that I do not think that our resources are in such a state as to render it necessary. I do not like to hold out any ideas of despondency in our financial affairs. I do not think them in a state so desperate as to justify this plan of indiscriminate rapine ; for a plan of indiscriminate rapine, in my opinion, it is : I say, I do not think our resources are in such a state as to justify a tax generally upon income ; the thing is in its nature unjust, because it is in its nature unequal. It is of all things the most unequal. Does the Minister mean to say, that a person possessing an income for life, only of a certain sum, and another person of the same income which he derives from the interest of his own capital, are equally rich, and can bear the same taxes ? A widow, for instance, who lives only upon a pension, and a person whose capital brings him in the same money by way of interest ? Certainly not ; the thing is too palpable to be argued ; and yet, by this plan of making income the standard of wealth, these two persons will be made to pay alike. But then the Minister gets over all these as minor objections. He says boldly at once, “ There must be some injustice after all ; and the only thing that can be done is, to take care that the injustice shall be as little as possible ; that he has brought it as near to justice as he can.” To which I answer, That may be his best method of bringing measures before us, but it is not such as I ought to vote for ; and thereby give up the domestic comfort of the most respectable part of the community—upon the principle therefore, of this measure, I am bound to oppose it. Besides, the event may happen which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has so eloquently anticipated to-night, namely, a choice between this measure and utter de-

struction ; it will then be time enough to assent to this. At present we are in no such state ; and we should, in my opinion, resist such measures until we are in such a state, for nothing but such an alternative can justify such an adoption ; at all events, I must have it in my power to say to my constituents, before I adopt this, that every other resource has been applied, and exhausted. Now I cannot say that, for there are others yet untouched, which ought to go before this measure is resorted to. There are many valuable things under the church establishment (not in the smallest degree beneficial to religion, but to swell out the pomp and pride, and imaginary greatness of some inflated individuals, which ought to be brought in aid of the public burdens. The individuals possessing these things ought to be made to contribute their full share. The corporations also are liable in the same manner, as I conceive—[Here a cry of "Hear! Hear! Hear!"] Mr. Tierney proceeded. I do not precisely understand what gentlemen mean by this sort of vociferation. I, for my own part, would not take the property of any body of men as a sacrifice to the state altogether ; but, when you tell me, that violent hands must be laid on the property of the public, then I will tell you, it ought to take another direction, and, I am now pointing out to you that direction. This tax is said to fall nearly equally on all sorts of property. That is not true ; I will tell you a property on which it does not fall ; on the property of a certain description of stockholders, or what may be called the leading London gentlemen, a description of persons extremely well known, whose patriotism is much esteemed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. These gentlemen can pay off any tax, without burdening themselves, indeed, the greater the taxes are, the richer they become, and they never succeed better than when the Minister succeeds in taxes. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says, that this plan will not cause the funds to fall, but will occasion them to rise, so if any gentleman possesses 20,000*l.* in the funds, his fortune may improve by this duty. If you rise the stock I say, for instance, 2 per cent. he will make a large sum of money by his capital ; so that, instead of taxing these gentlemen, (who by the way are the most able to bear it), you will increase their fortunes, while you ruin others beyond the power of redemption. Whereas your plan, to be worth any thing, should compel the monied men to take, at least, their share of the public burdens. I know that these observations do not apply to the mass of stockholders, but I do say they apply to those whom the Chancellor of the Exchequer always chuses to favour ; I mean those who are called the monied men of the city.

But there is another point to be considered, and it will soon turn

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out to be an answer to the declaration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, upon the utility of his plan to the public, and the protection it is to afford to property; which is, that under it, the whole property of England will soon shift hands. I know, that to a dry financier, that is matter of no concern; it is, to him, of no moment, to whom the property belongs, provided it produces a given sum to the revenue, but, there are others who will see indefinable mischief arising out of it, and will feel it too. Nor is it difficult to conceive how this may happen; for the great mass of the property of the country may change owners in the course of six, seven, eight, or nine years. That will make a great difference in the state of the country itself; for, if the rich man in the city buys the small estates of a number of gentlemen, (which will be one of the operations of this plan), although the estate will be the same, and the revenue the same, yet, the condition of whole districts of inhabitants, will be materially altered. When a gentleman of small fortune sells his estate, let him get ever so much for it, there are evils arising from that sale to some parts of his family, which are never to be avoided, nor adequately described. This is a point which, although it may be beyond the comprehension of some monied men, is yet well worthy the attention of this House.

If I had not known the sound of the voice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, so well as I do, or, if I had not had the pleasure of seeing him opposite to me, I should, from the sense of his discourse, have thought it was somebody who came into the House to reproach the Minister for his estimates for the last five years. I could hardly have supposed, from what was said to-night against adding perpetual taxes, and increasing the capital of debt, instead of raising large supplies within the year to prevent the accumulation of the capital of the debt, came from the same man, who has increased continually, for the last five years, the permanent taxes; who has, in that time also, added 150 millions to the capital of the national debt; I should have thought also, when I heard him vaunting upon the integrity and proud spirit of his country, and the desperation and perfidiousness of the enemy, that he was speaking of a Minister, who never degraded himself so far as to negotiate with the French Republic. I am not calling in question his sincerity; but I am calling in question his recollection, when I hear and see that the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 1798 censures, so unmercifully, the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 1796.

The Minister has been pleased to tell us in very lofty language, what Europe will think of our proceedings. I am not bound to care so much for what Europe may think, as what the people of

England must feel from our proceedings—I am a representative of the People of England, not a Member of the Congress at Rastadt. In my conscience I do believe it is by peace, and by peace only, the British empire can be secure; not such a peace as may be had on any terms, still less on dishonourable terms, but on peace fairly to be understood. I am as anxious as the Minister can be for the security, and the prosperity, and the glory of England; but when, as he eloquently says, the People of England “pay for the salvage” of their security; I mean that they should pay for that salvage, and for that only, not for the supposed interest, or the supposed honour of others. There was a time when I could have heard this language with patience, but when the people are told openly, as they are now, that this is not a war for our own honour, our own privileges, our own interest, or our own safety, but that we are embarking in it, for the supposed honour, the supposed privileges, the supposed interest, the supposed safety of Europe; I should be unworthy the situation I am in; I should betray my trust if I did not lift up my voice (insignificant as I am in this House) against a measure, when such are avowed to be its objects. Whenever any measure whatever is proposed that tends to keep up the dignity of the British empire, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will always find me throwing aside all political differences, and supporting him. On that ground I gave him my support upon the vote of the navy estimates. It was without losing sight of that ground that I hesitated about the estimates of the army, and which I then stated. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer has nothing in view in this vote which he now proposes, but the security of England; and I can hardly think that any Minister will be hardy enough to order a single man to go out of this country for any continental purposes, or still more for the supposed interests of other states. They have none of them any claims upon us that renders that a duty in us; the more especially still when he recollects that such is the state of the British empire, that a party of the land force, constitutionally belonging to Great Britain, is now in Ireland—Until we are in a desperate situation, I hope we shall not have any visionary expeditions. I am assured we are not in that state at present. I thought it my duty to oppose this plan upon its principle. Perhaps when the clauses of the bill, by which the resolutions will of course be followed up, come to be laid before us, and the blanks come to be filled up, I shall enter more at large into the subject; but I could not leave the House subject to the suspicion that I was overpowered in my judgement by the mere eloquence of the Minister, and still less should I be willing to have it understood, that I agreed with

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Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that as far as his calculations and foresight could enable him to judge, he did not expect that he should be obliged to call on Parliament for a greater supply than had now been laid before them in the enumeration of the ways and means. He wished it however to be understood, that by this assertion he did not preclude himself from calling for a farther sum, should unforeseen circumstances or emergencies make it necessary, neither was it to preclude him from calling for a vote of credit.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that he hoped he perfectly understood the right honourable gentleman, and that the whole of the supplies, the usual supplies he meant, of the navy, army, &c. were now before the House, and that no farther demand would be made except the vote of credit, whatever might be the amount of that vote.

Mr. Chancellor PITT repeated, that he was not aware of any other demand that his present view of circumstances would render necessary. He could not, indeed, pretend to perfect accuracy in the general detail of what he had advanced; but he could say with perfect truth that he had no intention of bringing forward any future demand, except that which he had already stated.

The resolutions were then agreed to, and the report ordered to be received to-morrow.

Tuesday, December 4.

Motion was made for bringing up the report of the Committee of Ways and Means.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR said, as the subject that was now about to be submitted to the consideration of the House, was of the most essential consequence, and embraced the greatest possible variety of interests, it was his opinion it should meet with the fullest and most mature discussion. He would therefore hint the propriety of the House being called over previous to their ultimate determination on this question.

Mr. HOBHOUSE said, that, for more reasons than one, he did not rise last night to deliver any opinion upon the nature and tendency of the measure, which was now to occupy the attention of the House. In the first place, he was not so vain as to presume that, at a moment when the minds of gentlemen must have been dazzled and biassed by the very brilliant and eloquent speech of the right honourable gentleman opposite to him (the Chancellor of the

Exchequer) any observations of his would have had the least weight. In the second place, he was anxious to bestow a due degree of attention upon the subject, and coolly examine whether the present scheme of finance, before he attempted to enter upon the discussion of it, were likely to operate to the advantage or injury of the country.

Before he proceeded to give his sentiments upon the principles of the plan, he could not but remark how often the financial projects of the right honourable gentleman had proved abortive. With respect to the shop tax, he was eager and earnest; but it had been abandoned. He was no less sanguine in his hopes of the watch tax, but he had been compelled to relinquish it: and although it had been repealed, yet a mortal blow had been given to that branch of commerce, from which it would probably never recover. To the scheme of the assessed taxes last year the right honourable gentleman was as fondly and firmly wedded. The bill was ushered into the House with the warmest encomiums, and with the greatest confidence in its productiveness and success; but he now finds, and confesses, that this resource has failed, or, at least, has fallen short of the lofty expectations he had formed.

The first consideration to which this subject naturally gave rise was, whether it would be advantageous to raise a considerable portion of the supplies within the year or not. For his own part, he acknowledged, that when the measure of the assessed taxes was under the discussion of the House, he had felt great doubts whether perseverance in the funding system would not be attended with the most fatal consequences; and hence he had grounded his opposition to that measure, not on the impolicy of raising the supplies to a considerable extent within the year, but on its retrospective operation and oppressive effects. All persons, he believed, agreed that it would have been a happy thing for the country if the funding system had never been resorted to at all, and if the custom had always been adopted of raising the supplies within the year. The funding system has been, if not the parent, at least the fosterer of many unnecessary wars; which wars might have been prevented, if the supplies necessary for maintaining them had been called for, and raised within the year—for if the people were made to feel, on the breaking out of a war, the full pressure of the burdens which it was likely to draw down upon them, they would not be so easily deluded as they are now; or so patiently made the sport and tool of a Minister's ambition. Such are the evils which might have been avoided, had the funding system never been adopted; and if it were prolonged beyond the present period, when the national debt

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was enormous and the taxes so burdensome, it was impossible to say where the mischief would end. Large loans would depress the stocks; the public would from year to year borrow upon still higher interest: hence the taxes would increase; the Minister would be able to borrow no more; the People would be broken down with the weight of their burdens; and national bankruptcy and ruin be the consequence.

Great also, in his opinion, were the evils which would result from endeavouring, under the present circumstances of the country, to raise the supplies within the year. The middling ranks would be oppressed and annihilated; they would be compelled to relinquish the situation which they were wont to fill in the country: in a word, they must cease to form a distinct class in the community, where two orders only would henceforward be discoverable; that of the eminently wealthy, and of the miserably indigent. Moreover, by forcing so large a sum of money out of the pockets of individuals within the year, persons in general would be under the necessity of practising the most rigid system of economy, which, by diminishing consumption, would injure manufactures, and consequently lessen that revenue, from which the means of paying the public creditor are derived. Between these two evils, the evil of persevering longer in the funded system, and the evil of the present attempt to raise a great part of the supplies within the year, he could not well balance his mind; and if, therefore, he had not other grounds for rejecting the present measure, he should feel himself at a loss to decide what vote he should give this night. Those grounds it was now his duty to state, that he might appear justified to the House for opposing the bringing up of the report.

He hoped he might be allowed to inquire, what would be the effect of making either expenditure, income, or property, the basis of taxation. If *expenditure* be made the criterion, then the avaricious capitalist would not pay his due proportion, but the weight would fall on him who, in consequence of having spent more than he could well afford, was least liable to support it. If *income* be taken as the test, then the tax would operate with glaring inequality. The man who had an income of 1000l. per annum arising from capital, and the man who gained the same annual sum by a profession or by business, surely ought not to be assessed in the same degree. If two merchants had each a thousand a year from their commerce, they ought not to be taxed alike: because the one might be obliged to apply a greater proportion of his income than the other, to the repair of buildings, or machinery. If *property* only be taxed, it might be argued, that those who had the greatest

property might not have the greatest income ; and that the necessary expenditure of two persons, who had equal property, might be very different. On these grounds he could not bring himself to believe, that either property, income, or expenditure, should solely and exclusively be taxed ; such a basis of taxation would, in his opinion, be highly unjustifiable ; and the most unexceptionable one that could be laid, ought to be formed out of a combination of the whole three. The individual should be rated according to the *property* he possessed, the *income* it produced, and the degree of *expenditure*, which his situation in life, the size of his family, or other considerations, might demand.

Besides the objection he had already offered to a tax upon income, he had others extremely strong and forcible : it was a tax which would strike with peculiar force at industry and the fruits of industry, while indolence was left untouched and encouraged—and what must be the natural consequence of this discouragement of industry ? Does it not tend to weaken that elasticity, and relax those springs which give life and activity to every branch of trade, commerce, agriculture, &c. &c. ? The merchant is accustomed annually to convert a part of his profits into capital. If the tax-gatherers call for a portion of those profits, he must devote less to the increase of his reproductive stock. Thus the progress of our trade would be obstructed. There was a passage in Sir James Steuart's celebrated work on Political Economy so appropriate, and at the same time so very short, that he hoped he might be permitted to read it. "As to the pure profits on trade," says that eminent writer, "although they appear to be income, yet I consider them rather as stock, and therefore they ought not to be taxed. They resemble the annual shoots of a tree, which augment the mass of it ; but are very different from the seed, or fruit, which is annually produced, and is annually separated from it." These shoots the Minister was now lopping, and thus the growth of the tree would be checked : a few years hence he would probably cut down the tree, that he might the more easily lay his hand upon the fruit.

Such were a few of the objections which pressed upon his mind against the principle of the proposed tax, and they appeared to him insuperable.

Mr. Hobhouse farther said, that he had not stated this tax to be a violation of the public faith to the stockholder, because he did not view it in that light. Undoubtedly there was a clause in all the loan acts, securing to the public creditor his dividends "free from all taxes, charges, and impositions whatever." But from the moment the money had found its way into the pocket of the stock-

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holder, from that moment it became liable to taxation. He would put a case. Suppose a person had an income entirely derived from the stocks, an income upon which he supported a handsome house, carriage, &c. If it were argued that such incomes ought not to be taxed, because they consisted of dividends arising out of the public funds, it would follow that such person ought not to pay the tax for his carriage, or for any of the articles of consumption. Neither had he insisted upon another case, namely, that all persons from 200*l.* per annum and upwards should pay a tenth part. Surely it was upon the face of it the most flagrant injustice to take 10*l.* per cent. from the man who possessed but 200*l.* per annum, while he, who rioted in the enjoyment of 40,000*l.* yearly income, paid no more. He should not, however, press this matter now, because in the Committee an ascending scale might be proposed, and, he hoped, adopted.

With respect to the mode of levying this tax, he wished to obtain some information. He begged to know whether the commissioners, employed in settling the assessment, were to have a poundage, or a stipend, like the commissioners for the redemption of the land tax, out of, and proportionate to, the sum collected. This would undoubtedly act as a stimulus upon the minds even of the respectable persons who were to be selected for that purpose, to force up the tax to the highest amount. Besides, how vexatious must it be for him, or for any man, who thought himself surcharged, to lay open his property even to a commissioner of the highest honour and character! In this light surely the measure was cruel and oppressive, and carried with it all the hideous features of a requisition.

As to the productiveness of this new financial project, he would not hesitate to say, that it was calculated, in some respects, to bring in more than the late act for augmenting the assessed taxes. Many persons, who did not under that act pay a tenth, because they were not rated to that amount, would now become liable to pay the full tenth of their incomes. Besides, as the oath of the parties was not to be final and conclusive, but the door was to be left open to farther inquiry, so many would not run the risque of committing perjury. But whatever the right honourable gentleman may think, methods may be found, in many cases, of defeating the operation of the new scheme. Suppose a person to have an estate which is mortgaged, and to follow a profession—he now pays the interest due to the mortgagee out of the rent of his land, and lives upon the remainder joined to the profits of his profession—when this bill is passed he will say, I will contract my expences, and live upon the

profits of my profession merely, and place my estate in the hands of trustees, with a power to devote the whole rent, not only to the payment of the accruing interest, but to the gradual reduction of my capital. By thus reducing his income, he is less affected by the tax. Is he not free to chuse whatever method he pleases of discharging his debts?

Mr. Hobhouse, before he concluded, begged to say a few words on the uses to which the millions, proposed to be raised by this tax, were to be applied: it was for the continuance of what was called a *just* and *necessary* war. On the propriety of these epithets, he had long since expressed his opinion to the House; and when a proper opportunity was afforded, he should again state, that he considered the war, in its origin, as unjust, as unnecessary, and as an act of aggression on our part; and that many opportunities had been lost of bringing it to a fortunate conclusion. But supposing it certain that the war could not now be terminated, it was to be carried on, he saw, upon a plan the most expensive and the most unwise: we were not only to subsidize foreign powers, but also to send over bodies of our troops to co-operate in their military expeditions. He was sorry to be compelled to use a strong and coarse expression, but really he did not expect to hear any thing so absurd from Ministers as, that after the fatal experience and fatal fruits of all their errors, they would now propose so monstrous a scheme of taxation, and that merely to gratify the Quixotism of delivering Europe from the yoke of France.

For these reasons he should oppose the bringing up of the report.

Mr. C. W. TAYLOR said it went to propose a tax upon income, and the obvious operation of such a tax, must lead to an inquiry and exposure of the state of each person's income; it was his opinion that this inquiry should take place before the bill went to be put in force; the appointed period for which he understood to be the 5th of April next. He would submit to the House the propriety of appointing the Commissioners immediately, that they might receive the statements which the bill went afterwards to require, and such voluntary declarations of income, as merchants particularly would be inclined to make before any inquiry was instituted; for merchants would doubtless agree even to larger sums from their own voluntary impulse, rather than after inquiry perhaps to be compelled to expose their books. The plan, in his opinion, was a good one, and it was but justice to the stockholder, to make every exertion to raise the funds. The stockholders ought principally to be considered, for in the sixth year of the war, the price of

land continued as high as ever, while the stockholder, at many periods of it, had lost near one half of his property. The stockholder was often compelled to sell out stock at any price, for the purposes, for example, of paying legacies, marriage portions, &c. Thus he may be under the necessity of selling at 53, or perhaps 44, what he bought in at 98; while the landholder now may receive as high a price as at the commencement of the war.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL said, that there would be no delay in appointing the Commissioners, and as to voluntary declarations of income, there would be a clause in the bill for admitting them.

Mr. JONES was a friend to the principle of the measure, but he feared its execution would involve many difficulties and inconveniences. He indeed last year had the honour of suggesting a similar measure; but notwithstanding the brilliant speech which still vibrated in his ear, and in which the right honourable gentleman had opened his plan and avowed the generous design of succouring oppressed Europe, yet he could not bind himself to vote for the measure, should the Commissioners be armed with any power to trench in the least on the privileges of the people of England. He never liked any thing that looked like an Inquisition. Theory and practice were well known to be often at variance, and though he approved the principle of the measure proposed, yet he would not be bound to adopt it if its execution gave rise to the difficulties which he foreboded. At all events he trusted that a full and fairer discussion would be given to it than to the measure of the land tax last year.

Mr. BUXTON lamented to have heard such harsh terms applied to the measure now proposed by his right honourable friend; it by no means called for, nor justified them; nor were the other observations that were thrown out by any means applicable to the question before the House, which was merely, that the report be now brought up. He heard much stress laid upon the words inquisitorial power; for his part, he could not see the measure in that light—on the contrary, he looked upon it as a plan as fair and candid as a Chancellor of the Exchequer could propose. Those who were to superintend its execution were also of the most unexceptionable character. They were to be drawn from that description of persons to whom are entrusted the execution of our civil and criminal laws—It was not therefore to be supposed that men of the first consequence in the country would lend their countenance and co-operation to a measure that deserved to be branded with the epithets which some gentlemen had thought proper to indulge in.

As to the difficulties attending it, they would not be found greater than those which at all times embarrassed measures of such various and comprehensive operation. He last year proposed, that if a tax was to be laid upon land, a tax also should be laid on income of every sort. It was his wish to see all property equally interested in the defence of the country, and equally to contribute towards the protection it received—Was not this the object of the measure now proposed, and why resist it, unless a fairer and more effectual one can be substituted in its stead? He was as steady a friend as any Member of that House to the real liberties of the country, and those who were friends to these liberties, should not grumble at sacrificing a few of their comforts in order to protect and secure them. It is objected to the measure that its object is to continue during the war, and that it was intended to subsidize foreign powers, in order to gain their co-operation against the common enemy. This, in his eyes, was no objection; on the contrary, he was bold to say, that no Minister should be permitted to remain in power in this country, who was not watchful in procuring and maintaining such continental connections: for this island, however proudly some gentlemen may be inclined to speak of its sufficiency, is and must be connected with Europe; and if any Minister neglected to keep up that connection by every possible means, he should be pronounced guilty of high treason, and punished for his guilt. If the powers on the Continent want money, the Minister would not be a true friend to his country if he did not endeavour to supply them. He trusted, therefore, that he would have the spirit to do so, and that nothing would be left untried to make all Europe, to a man, rise up and oppose the profligate ambition of an enemy that knows not where to stop, till he tramples upon the liberty and independence of the world.

Mr. JONES explained, and said that he had not the least objection to the principle of the measure.

The resolutions were then read, agreed to, and a bill ordered to be brought in in pursuance of them.

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT said, that what he was about to state would not, he trusted, detain the House for any considerable time. The motion he was about to offer to the House was so unobjectionable in itself, that he did not believe the House could see any impropriety whatever in it; and he rather thought that His Majesty's Ministers themselves would accede to it. He should therefore read it:—"That there be laid before this House a list of the names of all the prisoners confined under the act of the 38th of his present Majesty, entitled 'An act to empower His Majesty to

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secure and detain such persons as he shall suspect to be conspiring against his person and government, together with the names of the prisons in which such persons are confined."

He then said he should not press this motion now, if he was given to understand there was the least objection to it; he should, in that case, bring it forward on some future day.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said the honourable Baronet had done rightly when he determined to take time before he made this motion, if it was objected to; it certainly was not a motion of course, and therefore the honourable Baronet would now take an opportunity of naming some day for the discussion of it.

The motion was then appointed for Monday.

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR moved the other order of the day, which was to take into consideration four resolutions of the Committee of Supply upon the army estimates.

The House proceeded to consider the resolutions.

On reading that which relates to the supplementary militia,

Lord WILLIAM RUSSELL said, there were some complaints upon this branch of the public service in that part of the country in which he lived. The expence was such that the people could not support it. There was a great difficulty in procuring substitutes, and when procured, they deserted very frequently. This became a very troublesome business to that part of the country. He wished Ministers to take it into consideration, and endeavour to find out some relief.

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR said, he did not know of any particular grievance that belonged to one part of the country more than another in this particular. If the noble Lord had any thing to suggest by way of remedy, he should be happy to hear it. Inquiry might, perhaps, lead to some suggestions for remedies, but until something of that kind took place, he knew of nothing that could be done.

The resolution was then put and carried.

Wednesday, December 5.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought in a bill for repealing the assessed taxes of last year, and imposing, instead thereof, a new duty upon income; which was read a first time.

On the motion that it be read a second time to-morrow,

Sir ROBERT CLAYTON said his object was not to support men but measures. If he had been in the House the other night,

he should not have agreed with a certain Baronet in the propriety of reducing the number of seamen; he thought such a measure would by no means have been right. If it had not been for the navy, we should not be in the situation we now were. While we had such a navy, we had nothing to fear from invasion, notwithstanding the flights of a noble Lord in the other House [Here he was called to order]. He wished the public money to be advanced for the navy, but he did not much approve of giving it to the army. He never would give his consent to continental connections, nor to any loans to foreign Princes—he did not like such systems. He was against Mr. Pitt, and for Mr. Fox [Cries of order, and the Speaker signified it was improper to mention names]. He meant that person. He wished that another person would attend Parliament; he wished that Mr. Fox [Here he was called to order]. It was said they could not turn Ministers out; true, it was difficult. The Opposition opposed Lord North for seven years; but if they had not attended and succeeded, they never would have turned him out. He was of opinion that the present Ministers misconducted the public affairs, and if a wiser policy was not adopted, he was afraid we should lose Ireland as we lost America. He was against the plan of the assessed taxes; but he did not swear off, but paid them. He believed, however, that much perjury had been committed in consequence of these assessments. He was no orator, and knew not how to speak to advantage; but his conscience dictated he ought to speak. He was against this tax upon income; he was against laying open all the accounts of the trader, the merchant, and the banker; it was to him a dreadful thought. But, if it must go on, he hoped somebody would propose that only 10 per cent. should attach on 500l. a year, and 20 per cent upon a thousand, and advance the rate as we go upwards. If placemen and pensioners should support that plan, then he would say they were good Statesmen. With regard to the right honourable gentleman, he owned he was a very lucky Minister: for he never had to open a session but some successes had just previously occurred to his advantage. Indeed the present Minister reminded him of a *Cat*; for tofs and throw him as you will, he always lights upon his feet; he is always upon his legs: he begged pardon, but he wished to declare his public opinion; he thought the country in such a situation that every honest, independant man ought to come forward and deliver his opinion. He should oppose this measure in every stage; but if the House should be determined to go on with it, he should have a clause to propose relative to all places and pensions when the bill came into the Committee.

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The bill was then read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR hoped that the right honourable gentleman would alter his determination to commit the bill upon Friday, because he wished the House to be called over upon this day fortnight. Upon all great occasions, it had been the usual practice to move a call of the House, for enforcing a fuller attendance; and if that had been done upon former occasions, it could hardly be successfully resisted in the present, when such a variety of important considerations was involved. For a century past we have been accustomed to raise the extraordinary sums that were necessary, through the medium of the funding system; that plan had been pursued for above a century with success. A new system had been adopted now; and so far was it from being brought to perfection, that the right honourable gentleman had been under the necessity of proposing the repeal of the first attempt towards it. Under these circumstances, he entertained a considerable degree of jealousy and apprehension. It occurred to him also, that the present measure might occasion a nice and delicate discussion, which would require the united wisdom of the House. Among the questions to be discussed, would be the propriety of increasing the scale according to the wealth and incomes of parties. He was apprehensive also of the effect of this tax upon the funds; and of the operation of it upon the property of British subjects, who were resident in this country, but whose property was situated in foreign parts. If, to the load of taxes which the people had to bear, there was to be added this disclosure of a man's circumstances, he was afraid that it would encourage a spirit of emigration. The income of the country had been stated at 100,000,000*l*. But gentlemen seemed to forget, that out of that sum we paid thirty millions for taxes; the only free expenditure, therefore, was seventy millions; and that was to be reduced by the present measure to sixty millions. Besides, it was justly to be feared that the plan would tend to reduce the amount of the permanent taxes of the country; it would also increase the prices of the necessaries of life; and though many of those necessaries were, fortunately, at present low, yet others were so high, as to affect in a great degree the comforts of the people. He thought, therefore, that there ought to be a full assemblage of the representatives of the people, because by the united talents and wisdom of the House, some other measure might be devised which would answer the purposes more effectually than the present; or if no such measure could be found out, that their attendance would render the plan less exceptionable than it was at present. On these grounds he

submitted the propriety of a call of the House, on Friday se'nnight, or on this day fortnight, in order that the people might be satisfied that the subject had undergone the fullest discussion. He had only to add, that if in the course of such full discussion, the objections which he had stated should be removed, and if it should be proved that no better measure could be produced, he was such a friend to his country and its interests, that he would then wave any farther opposition to the present plan. He concluded by moving, that this House be called over on this day fortnight.

Mr. TYRWHITT could not see any reason for a call of the House, as such a full attendance had taken place on the day upon which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had opened his plan; he could not but suppose that the debates upon the bill would also be fully attended. He therefore was against the compulsory mode of enforcing a call of the House.

Mr. MARTIN was against the motion. He had long thought that if those who did not attend the House were to be made to attend, the House would not profit much by their attendance. He did not mean to allude to any particular persons, but to men of all parties, who having no business in the country, and being employed upon nothing but idle amusements, so grossly neglected their duty. He was only surprised that the constituents who had elected them did not enforce their attendance in Parliament.

The motion for the call was negatived.

Thursday, December 6.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that the act of last session, for the sale and redemption of the land tax, be now read.

The act being read accordingly,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that it was his intention now to move for leave to bring in a bill to render the said act more effectual, and to give greater facility to the execution of its provisions. This additional facility was in the first instance the object of the new bill; but among the intended regulations one of the first would be to allow an extension of the time now limited for the redemption. He likewise thought it advisable to make certain provisions for enabling persons to make contracts in sums of money for the redemption of the tax. There were also persons who possessed estates in different counties, and by the last bill such persons were enabled to charge their property in one county, in order to redeem their land tax in another. This point, in his mind,

involved no difficulty, but it still gave rise to some objections among the Commissioners, which he was now desirous to remove. It was another leading object of the new bill to make certain regulations respecting ecclesiastical property, and persons possessing property devised for lives and on long terms, and who had no claim to the same benefits as persons enjoying entailed estates; he doubted not but a mode might be devised of extending the advantages of the act to all such persons. Some objections also had arisen respecting the inequality of assessments in different parishes; it was even supposed, and perhaps upon just grounds, that there existed some inequality in the assessments of different parishes—that some persons had been over-rated might be true; it was therefore his wish to allow them a *pro rata* reduction, in consideration of their being so over-rated. In such cases also where a re-assessment had taken place, he intended to propose that such persons as had redeemed their land tax, should not be liable to any additional assessment. There were many other points upon which he would not at present detain the House; but he deemed it his duty to state the principal outlines, that gentlemen might turn them in their mind, and assist him by their observations.

This, he trusted, they would be soon able to do, because he felt exceedingly desirous to expedite the measure, on account of the great avidity that manifested itself in every corner of the country to partake of the advantages which the act held out. There might, indeed, remain some doubts upon point of detail, but these he expected would be fully cleared away by the provisions of the new act. Whatever might have been the greater doubts and greater objections, that some had at first raised against the measure, he was happy to be able to say that such doubts and objections would soon appear to have been wholly unfounded, for the success, he could boldly assert, had far exceeded his most sanguine expectations. He then concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill, to enlarge the time limited for the redemption of the land-tax, and to explain and amend the provisions of the bill introduced last session for that purpose.

Mr. T. T. JONES said, he did not rise to oppose the motion made by the right honourable gentleman, especially if the measure he had in contemplation was, as the right honourable gentleman intimated, so palatable to the public. But that alterations and amendments should be necessary to it, he was not at all surprised; for he could not forget the precipitancy with which the right honourable gentleman hurried the land-tax bill through the House last year, notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of many respectable gentlemen that farther time might be allowed for a mature examination

of its various and complicated clauses. He was sorry to use any thing like offensive or harsh expressions, but he could not help saying that it was a severe reflection on the right honourable gentleman not to have attended more patiently to the solicitations of the House upon that occasion; it might be said that a few alterations would render the bill acceptable, but, in his opinion, no alterations could remove what was objectionable in it. We had it from high authority, that the measure had already been productive of the happiest consequences, yet we are now told that the bill cannot go on as it now stands. Indeed he felt so much and so keenly for the landed interest, that he could not but consider the present measure as a blow aimed at it in favour of the monied interest, nor could he help adopting the opinion and the words of an honourable Member, that between the landed and the monied interest, property was about to change hands. The measure he always looked upon as iniquitous, and if no more competent Member than himself would take it up, he should feel it incumbent upon himself to make an effort that an act of justice might be done to the landed proprietors; for the measure now proposed he had no hesitation in denominating, *the Child of inordinate Power.*

Mr. Chancellor PITT was not more surprised at the asperity of language used by the honourable gentleman, than at the incoherency of his arguments. It appeared from what he advanced, that the honourable gentleman had as little attended to the original provisions of the act, as to the beneficial effects it had produced throughout the country. What was now proposed was merely some few subordinate provisions for facilitating the execution of the act, and for extending its benefits by a wider operation. Contrary to the assertion of the honourable gentleman, he not only did not say that the bill could not go on, but he had expressly asserted, that it had already been attended with very great benefits, and those even such as had far exceeded his most sanguine expectations. How true, how correct, how dispassionate were the honourable gentleman's observations, he would freely leave it to his cooler reflection to consider. The honourable gentleman talks of some measure of justice towards the landed interest. This again was strong language; but he was happy to say that there was no call for any such measure; for in spite of the objections and opposition of the honourable gentleman, and of a few of his friends, and in spite of the clamour that had been so industriously raised against the measure, it would abundantly appear that it had proved not only beneficial to the country at large, but particularly advantageous to the landed interest. The bill, in its passage through the House last session,

had undergone many weeks discussion; there was no stage of it in which its principle or its provisions were not opposed, he would not say by trite or frivolous arguments, for many of those that were urged were the result of calm judgement and cool consideration; yet this is the bill which the honourable gentleman contends was hurried through the House with unbecoming precipitancy. The honourable gentleman is also pleased to stile it an act of power: and most unquestionably with great propriety, for it was an act of the Legislature, and he trusted that acts of the Legislative would long prove to be acts of power. Nor did he conceive it so severe a reflection upon his conduct as the honourable gentleman seemed disposed to insinuate: that he should have preferred the general opinion of the House to that of the honourable gentleman and some few of his friends, and that he was less swayed by their solicitations than by the well-founded arguments of those who framed and supported the bill. As to his not foreseeing the necessity of the bill being altered and amended, that was a reflection which he was not anxious to ward off. It was not merely the fault of his foresight, but was also a reflection upon the foresight of the ablest law authorities in the kingdom, who never pretended, much less did he pretend, to attain complete perfection at once, especially in a measure so various, so complicated and so extensive. He had now been twelve or fourteen years endeavouring to bring forward measures of that nature, and he was not ashamed to confess that the first specimens of his schemes were not as correct and perfect as farther inquiry, and more minute investigation, might have rendered them. Of most of his financial plans he could say the same, but he trusted that by perseverance and attention he had brought them to something like perfection. He did not therefore feel the least hurt at not being supposed to have in the first instance made a bill more correct and perfect, that was to be framed out of new, difficult and intricate matter. As often as he was censured for his endeavours to correct his measures, so often should he receive such censures as compliments.

Mr. JONES explained, and contended that the gentlemen who had formerly divided with him against the bill, had always urged against it the best founded arguments.

Mr. BURDON was so far from expecting the bill should have met with no obstacles, that it appeared to him surprizing it should have proved so practicable in the very outset. He could not therefore but applaud the wisdom of his right honourable friend in adopting such alterations as would give additional facility to the execution of its provisions, by which the country had already been so ma-

terially benefited. But he principally rose to express a wish, that whatever amendments were necessary to the bill, might be introduced as speedily as possible, and he particularly approved of that which extended the time of payment—here he wished as much latitude might be given as possible for such payments, as if made in stock, he would think it more adviseable. In the progress of the bill he hoped there would be introduced a clause to settle the test of freeholders at elections, which at present was a point that seemed to remain undecided. Upon the whole he was satisfied that the bill would not appear to have had in view the object which some gentlemen pretended to give it, namely, to serve certain political purposes; but that it would be clearly demonstrated, especially when it was duly amended, that its operation would tend to the general good of the country—in that light it should have his most cordial support.

The motion was then put, and leave accordingly given to bring in the bill.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR said, he wished to submit a motion to the House, to which he could not think that His Majesty's Ministers would make the least objection. Its object was to get information why the charge in the army estimates for staff officers should have so far exceeded that of last year.

Mr. Chancellor PITT did not object to the motion: but said, that before the papers were laid before the House, he could satisfy the honourable gentleman's curiosity, by informing him, that as last year a very considerable body of the Supplementary Militia had been called out into actual service, it was natural that a proportionable augmentation should have taken place in the number of staff officers.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR then moved, "that there be laid before this House a return of the General and Staff Officers now serving within *Great Britain*, distinguishing the ranks of the different officers, specifying the divisions of the kingdom where they are now serving, and shewing the amount of pay received by each officer."—which was ordered.

An ACCOUNT of the TOTAL NET PRODUCE of the TAXES for ONE YEAR, ended the 10th Day of October 1708: distinguishing each Quarter: And also distinguishing the DUTIES imposed in 1793, 1794, 1795,

An ACCOUNT of the TOTAL NET PRODUCE of the TAXES for ONE YEAR, ended the 10th Day of October 1798 ; distinguishing each Quarter : And also distinguishing the DUTIES imposed in 1793, 1794, 1795, 1796, 1797, and 1798.

	Quarter ended 5th January 1798.	Quarter ended 5th April 1798.	Quarter ended 5th July 1798.	Quarter ended 10th October 1798.	Year ended 10th October 1798.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
CONSOLIDATED CUSTOMS, after deducting 29,169l. 1s. 5d. computed quarterly sum to be carried to the duties pro anno 1796 — — —	780,582 13 10½	543,824 5 9	414,289 2 7	1,684,714 14 3	3,423,410 16 5½
CONSOLIDATED EXCISE - - Referred out of duty on paper anno 1794, 18,750l., being 1-4th part of 75,000l., the annual average produce of former duties then repealed	1,873,610 9 2½	1,639,654 9 3¼	2,009,748 4 5½	1,833,154 12 2½	7,347,167 15 1½
Referred out of duty on spirit licences anno 1794, 9,000l., being 1-4th part of 36,000l., the annual average produce of former duties then repealed, and in full to the 5th July 1798 - - -	18,750 0 0	18,750 0 0	18,750 0 0	18,750 0 0	75,000 0 0
	9,000 0 0	9,000 0 0	9,000 0 0	—	27,000 0 0

DEBATES.

CONSOLIDATED STAMPS —	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Referved out of duty on hats anno 1796, 2,369l. 17s. 9d., being 1-4th part of 9,479l. 11s., the annual average produce of former duties then repealed — —	283,969	0	0	229,696	0	0	230,841	0	0	285,850	4	5	1,030,356	4	5
Referved out of bills and receipts anno 1794, 32,150l., being 1-4th part of 128,600l., the annual average produce of former duties then repealed — —	2,369	17	9	2,369	17	9	2,369	17	9	2,369	17	9	9,479	11	0
Referved out of duty on legacies anno 1796, 10,269l. 15s., being 1-4th part of 41,079l., the annual average produce of former duties then repealed, to compleat deficiencies to 5th July 1798, and in full to 10th October 1798 — —	13,094	0	0	21,431	0	0	18,771	16	2	10,269	15	0	63,566	11	2
£.	3,013,526	0	10	2,487,875	12	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	2,735,920	0	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	3,867,259	3	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	12,104,580	18	2

PARLIAMENTARY

[COMMONS.]

INCIDENTS.

L. s. d. L. s. d. L. s. d. L. s. d.

12,104,580 18 2
3,001,239 3 7 1/2
2,155,920 0 11 1/2
94
24,130 13 2 1/2
3,000 0 0 0

DEBATES.

INCIDENTS.

Consolidated letter money, the annual average produce of the duty prior to the year

1795	102,639	0	0	102,639	0	0	102,639	0	0	410,556	0	0
Ditto salt, 1787	124,491	13	8	121,696	0	3	120,640	18	4	446,702	0	0 1/2
Seizures, 1760	10,148	12	8	12,884	9	4	13,592	0	11	49,150	15	10
Profers, 1760	10	0	0	26	15	11	491	13	4	622	8	3
Alum mines, 1760	—	—	—	480	0	0	—	—	—	960	0	0
Compositions, 1760	—	0	6	2	6	8	—	—	—	3	0	0
Rent of a light-house, 1760	—	—	—	6	13	4	—	—	—	6	13	4
6d. deduction on pensions, 1721	18,693	0	0	13,000	0	0	11,000	0	0	52,693	0	0
1s. ditto on salaries, 1758	12,988	11	4 1/2	38,498	14	4	9,534	14	6	68,705	16	8 1/2
Houses and windows, 1766	98,352	4	10 1/2	65,462	4	9 3/4	141,700	6	5 1/2	339,055	18	0 1/4
Inhabited houses, 1779	41,695	7	10 1/2	26,983	5	10	66,107	7	6 3/4	172,873	17	4
Hawkers and pedlars, 1710	1,365	0	0	2,040	3	6	1,184	0	0	5,719	3	6
Hackney coaches and chairs, 1711 and 1784	5,700	0	0	5,500	0	0	5,800	0	0	24,000	0	0
Male servants, 1785	31,422	0	1	18,336	10	3 1/2	39,812	19	7	112,934	13	8 1/2
Horses, 1785	38,322	5	8 1/2	31,308	10	10 1/4	51,389	4	10 1/2	135,403	6	2 1/2
Four-wheeled carriages, 1785	48,246	19	0 1/2	21,685	7	5	75,374	0	9	167,897	15	10
Two-wheeled ditto, 1785	15,319	1	8 1/2	5,140	15	9 3/4	24,367	18	4 3/4	51,834	1	9
First fruits of the clergy	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,549	9	0	3,549	9	0
Tenth's ditto	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,872	5	6 1/2	9,872	5	6 1/2
Lottery licences	2,433	3	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,433	3	6
Alienation duty	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,798	19	4	1,798	19	4

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Arrears of waggons	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ditto carts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ditto men servants.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ditto female servants	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ditto houses and windows, 1747 and 1758.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ditto shops	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
£.	551,827	7	2	465,798	0	0	678,861	4	1	360,424	17	0 $\frac{3}{4}$	056,911	8	3 $\frac{3}{4}$
DUTIES pro Anno 1793.															
British spirits, 1791	14,042	0	0	33,647	0	0	31,671	0	0	7,589	0	0	86,949	0	0
Foreign ditto	34,897	0	0	37,478	0	0	30,946	0	0	27,193	0	0	130,514	0	0
£.	48,939	0	0	71,125	0	0	62,617	0	0	34,782	0	0	217,463	0	0

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DUTIES pro Anno 1794.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.
Sugar 1791 — — —	72,292	15	10½	10,714	15	4½	6,329	11	2
Bills and receipts, after referring the annual average produce as aforeaid — —	2,273	0	0	6,952	0	0	9,564	0	0
Game duty — — —	8,795	0	0	4,103	0	0	1,302	0	0
10l. per cent. — — —	25,870	3	¾	9,687	5	½	10,637	14	¼
British spirits, 1794 — — —	14,140	0	0	33,777	0	0	32,174	0	0
Foreign ditto — — —	38,552	0	0	30,290	0	0	29,225	0	0
Attornies articles — — —	2,897	0	0	3,693	0	0	4,995	0	0
Spirit licences, after referring the annual average produce as aforeaid — —	62,361	5	0	50,500	0	0	9,351	10	0
Glasg — — —	10,709	0	0	11,480	0	0	10,847	0	0
Bricks and tiles (Customs) — — —	106	14	1	—	—	—	50	7	9
Ditto - - - (Excise) — — —	24,982	0	0	5,345	0	0	981	0	0
Paper - - - (Customs) — — —	1,570	11	8½	83	0	8	2,829	10	3
Ditto - - - (Excife) after referring the annual produce as aforeaid — —	23,688	0	0	22,016	0	0	12,948	0	0
Slates and stones — — —	3,820	13	5½	3,341	8	0½	2,925	1	2
£.	292,058	3	5½	191,982	9	6½	134,159	14	5½

DUTIES pro Anno 1795.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
British spirits	13,281	0	0	33,725	0	0	31,658	0	0	7,550	0	0
Foreign ditto	38,214	0	0	30,499	0	0	28,979	0	0	29,315	0	0
Wines	53,532	0	0	70,875	0	0	132,079	0	0	133,472	0	0
Sweets	473	0	0	944	0	0	1,943	0	0	2,523	0	0
Cocoa	6,412	0	0	6,200	0	0	4,669	0	0	6,496	0	0
Stamps	6,766	0	0	8,749	0	0	7,670	0	0	8,592	18	3
Ship policies	20,814	0	0	12,172	0	0	31,556	0	0	31,517	8	9
Hair-powder certificates	10,184	0	0	5,824	0	0	71,595	0	0	70,075	6	3
Receipts	1,435	0	0	1,907	0	0	1,832	0	0	2,104	3	5
Fruits, &c.	43,717	12	0	8,599	7	6½	23,056	9	4½	31,503	5	0½
Coals	3,583	11	1	1,729	10	3	6,993	1	11½	5,947	16	8½
Tea	37,168	5	2	46,536	0	0	51,262	0	0	59,166	0	0
Consolidated letter money, the computed annual increase of revenue, by reason of the restriction of franking, per act 35 Geo. III.	10,000	0	0	10,000	0	0	10,000	0	0	10,000	0	0
Spirit licences	—	—	—	—	—	—	16,851	10	0	7,750	0	0
£.	245,580	8	3	237,759	17	9½	420,144	1	4	406,012	18	5
										1,309,497	5	9½

DUTIES pro Anno 1796.

[illegible]

Total of Customs, Excise, and

Salt	—	—	—	—	—	14,519	9	4	85,910	3	4	100,429	12	8
Armorial bearings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7,373	0	0	7,373	0	0
Tea	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	34,957	0	0	34,957	0	0
Horses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,500	0	0	2,500	0	0
£.	—	—	—	—	—	14,519	9	4	130,740	3	4	145,259	12	8
Total of Customs, Excise, and Stamps	—	—	—	—	—	2,735,920	0	11½	3,867,259	3	7½	12,104,580	18	2
Total of Incidents	—	—	—	—	—	678,861	4	1	360,424	17	6¼	2,056,911	8	3½
Duties pro Anno 1793	—	—	—	—	—	62,617	0	0	34,782	0	0	217,463	0	0
1794	—	—	—	—	—	134,159	14	5¾	322,143	5	5¾	940,343	12	10¾
1795	—	—	—	—	—	420,144	1	4	406,012	18	5	1,309,497	5	9½
1796	—	—	—	—	—	435,808	10	2	447,544	16	11½	1,492,075	11	9½
1797	—	—	—	—	—	657,041	17	1½	744,979	18	11	2,304,489	19	6½
1798	—	—	—	—	—	14,519	9	4	130,740	3	4	145,259	12	8
£.	—	—	—	—	—	5,139,071	17	5¼	5,313,887	3	9½	20,570,621	9	2

Exchequer,
the 3d day of December 1798.

JAMES FISHER.

Friday, December 7.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought up a bill to enlarge the time limited for the redemption of the land tax, and to amend the act for the sale thereof, &c. which was read a first time.

On the question for the second reading,

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR suggested the propriety of some delay in so important a matter as this.

Right Honourable DUDLEY RYDER thought the proposition of the honourable Baronet a singular one; for this matter was amply discussed when it was before the House last year; and this was only to give a facility to carrying into effect what Parliament had already approved; and so, he believed, had the great bulk of the country. It was strange if the House wanted time to determine whether its own intentions should be carried into effect.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he proposed the second reading of this bill to-morrow; and as he had no apprehension that the business of the loan would on Monday occupy much time, he should think it would be convenient to go into a Committee upon this bill on that day; that, indeed, he considered as the proper stage for the discussion: and as the honourable Baronet seemed to be totally ignorant of the contents, he should propose that the bill be printed.

Mr. HUSSEY wished that this bill might meet as much dispatch as was consistent with the nature of the thing; but could not help adverting to the expence with which it had been attended. He thought it his duty, as one of the representatives of the People, to examine into that matter. He did not pretend to know the real state of the case; but he had heard that the expence already incurred was not less than one million. He did not state these things slightly; but if he was misinformed, the Minister would correct him.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, if the plan which the bill was intended to enforce, had cost the public the sum alluded to by the honourable gentleman, it would have been cheaply purchased; but he had not the most distant comprehension, or even guess, how such, or any thing like such, an expence could attend the execution of this act. He should be glad to have some specific information upon that matter.

Mr. HUSSEY could not give the Minister the particulars. But had the right honourable gentleman never heard of this, nor any thing like it?

Mr. Chancellor PITT—Never.

The bill was then ordered to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought up a bill to continue, for a time to be limited, a bill to enable His Majesty to accept of the services of such part of the militia as may voluntarily offer themselves for service in Ireland, &c.—Which was read a first time; and on the question for the second reading,

Mr. TIERNEY said, that he felt so much disposed to give every possible credit and confidence to the noble Lord at the head of affairs in that country, that he was ready, as far as in him lay, to put any force whatever under the direction of that Noble Lord. But feeling that mischief might have been done, and he was afraid that incalculable mischief had been done in that country, he could not possibly support this bill; and yet so situated were things there at this time, that he knew not how to oppose the measure now before the House.

The bill was ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

The income bill being in a Committee of the whole House,

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that perhaps the Committee would dispense with formalities in the present stage of this important proceeding, as the amendments should be printed, and the bill be afterwards recommitted; and that he proposed to have the discussion of the measure on the recommitment of the bill.

The bill then, *pro forma*, passed the Committee, and the report was ordered for to-morrow.

Saturday, December 8.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had received from Sir John Borlase Warren the following Letter, in return to the thanks of this House, signified to him by Mr. Speaker, in obedience to their commands of the 21st day of November last.

SIR, Canada, Barn Pool, 6th December, 1798.

I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 22d of November, inclosing the Resolution of thanks of the House of Commons.

It is difficult for me to express the sense I entertain of the high honour conferred upon me, by so august an Assembly as the House of Commons of Great Britain, by their vote of thanks, and their approval of my conduct, with that of my Brother Officers, Seamen and Marines, on the 12th of October last; and which I have, in obedience to your com-

mands, communicated this day to the officers and several ships companies that composed the Squadron.

The greatest encouragement that an officer can receive to a faithful discharge of his duty, is to obtain the good opinion of his Country, expressed by their representatives in Parliament assembled.

I am convinced that the officers and men, with whom I acted on the above day, as well as myself, will continue to preserve the most grateful remembrance of so high a distinction, to the latest hour of their lives; and we rely upon your goodness to make these sentiments known to the honourable House of Commons.

I take the liberty to return you, Sir, my best acknowledgements for the very polite manner in which you have been pleased to signify to me the thanks of the House; and also to assure you that I feel most sensibly, the favourable light in which you are pleased to consider those events of service in which I have been concerned since the commencement of the war, but more particularly in the defeat of the armament commanded by Monsieur Bompard; as it may have been the means of preserving Ireland from the calamitous consequences which foreign interference and invasion might have produced in that country.

*I have the honour to remain, with the utmost respect,
Sir,*

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN BORLASE WARREN.

*The Right Honourable
HENRY ADDINGTON,
Ec. Ec. Ec.*

Monday, December 10.

General TARLETON said he held a petition in his hand from the Mayor, Aldermen, Bailiffs, and Common Council of the town of Liverpool, praying that leave may be given to bring in a bill to improve and extend the harbour of Liverpool. If this petition came only from a respectable commercial body, it would be entitled to the attention of the House; but when it was recollected that the town which he had the honour of representing, had pressed forward when the enemy threatened our shores, and evinced the highest degree of public spirit, by putting the port of that borough into the best and most honourable state of security, scarce waiting for the permission of the Legislature, it was with pleasure that he embraced this opportunity of paying that just tribute to their public spirit, as well personal as pecuniary, as he believed he should soon have an

opportunity of making up in his professional line for lost time, in his profession, for the safety and honour of the country :—which petition was then read, and referred to a Committee.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means, pursuant to the order of the day,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he should not be under the necessity of troubling the Committee at any great length. When he had given notice to the House of his intention to propose the Ways and Means of the year, he had it in contemplation to have submitted the whole amount of the loan of fourteen millions, exclusive of Ireland. He had, however, found, that it would be much more beneficial for the public service to defer the bulk of it till after Christmas, because he had every reason to believe that it might be obtained upon better terms for the public then, than it could be at the present moment. The opinion he had formed had been confirmed by what passed at the time of negotiating the loan, and by what had occurred since. He had thought it, therefore, to be his duty to raise only a loan of three millions for the exigencies of the public service, till after the recess. It was with considerable satisfaction he stated to the Committee, that numerous offers had been made for this loan of three millions ; that a very great degree of cordiality and zeal for the public service had been manifested by all the parties ; and that the loan had been taken by an offer considerably under the market price. He had, however, also the satisfaction of knowing that the parties who had taken the loan were not likely to be losers by their bargain. The temporary depression of the funds had been removed ; and a bargain made below the market price of the day afforded now a considerable premium. At the time of negotiating the loan, the 3 per cents. were at $52\frac{1}{2}$, and the reduced at $51\frac{3}{4}$.

For every 100l. in money advanced, the subscribers were to have 100l. in the 3 per cents. which was worth 52l. 10s. and also a proportion equal to about seven eighths of 100l. in the reduced, which was 87l. 9s. 6d. reduced ; the value of which in money was 46l. 12s. $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. In addition to this, as the payments were to be made in three instalments by the 22d February, no discount was proposed to be given for prompt payment, because the instalments would be soon enough for the exigencies of the public service. An allowance, therefore, was to be made in lieu of the discount on prompt payment ; which allowance would amount to 13s. 4d. ; the whole sum then given for every 100l. advanced would be, viz.

	£.	s.	d.
100l. in the 3 per cents. at $52\frac{1}{2}$	52	10	0
Seven-eighths of 100l. reduced, or 87l. 9s. 6d. reduced	46	12	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Allowance in lieu of discount on prompt payment	0	13	4
	99	15	$5\frac{1}{2}$

which was less by about $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. than the sum advanced. The loan so raised bore now about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. premium; conceiving, therefore, that the deferring the bulk of the loan till after the recess, was founded in prudence, and was beneficial to the public, he should trouble the Committee no farther, but content himself with moving his first resolution, That it is the opinion of this Committee, that a loan of three millions be raised by annuities.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR asked, whether on this, as on former occasions, the taxes necessary to defray the interest of this sum were not immediately to be voted?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the honourable Baronet had not investigated this matter with his usual diligence. He was certainly not right as to the historical fact, for until he (Mr. Pitt) came into office, nothing had been more common than to vote the money for the public service, and to provide the interest for the same on a following, and perhaps a distant day. He had always made it a rule to vote the ways and means, with the provisions for the same, on the day when the supplies were granted. On this occasion the practice, in his opinion, may be dispensed with. It was not necessary to provide at present for the interest of these 3,000,000l. he should bring forward the provisions for the interest of the whole of the loan on a future day, and when the subject would be seen in one point of view.

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT said—I rise, Sir, in pursuance of the notice I gave the other day, of my intention to bring forward a motion I then read; and had it not been for the objection of the right honourable gentleman opposite to me, I should at that time have submitted it to the consideration of the House. I think, Sir, this motion derives additional consequences from that objection having been made; but, although I am as fully aware, as any man can be, how formidable must be any objection from the Minister to any measure brought forward in this House, notwithstanding upon the present occasion, I do flatter myself with great hope of success. I trust the House will feel it to be its duty to support a demand so reasonable as that which this motion contains, and which so essen-

tially concerns the interests of every man, both in and out of this House. Sir, the House is already in possession of the contents of the motion I am now going to recal to its notice; and, I must say, that upon this one subject I do look to its decision with considerable confidence; for, Sir, although gentlemen may highly disapprove of those general principles of liberty which I have professed, although there may be, and no doubt there are many good and wise men who may think exaggerated principles of freedom only tending to despotism; from such men I think I have nothing of hostility to dread upon the present occasion; nay, Sir, should there be men composed of such base materials, so low and grovelling in their nature, as to have a sort of innate predilection and love of arbitrary power, even such men, I think, if such men there be, will not, I trust, be inclined to give any opposition to the motion I am about to propose; for, Sir, however desirable they may think it to deprive the People of all political rights and privileges, for the better preservation of that peace and tranquillity which forms the constant theme of their pænegyric, nevertheless, Sir, they will so far agree with me, that in order to procure that very peace and tranquillity at the shrine of which they are ready to sacrifice every nobler consideration—in order to relieve men from constant anxiety and hourly apprehension, it is necessary that some degree of personal safety should be afforded to the subject from the State. Why then, Sir, if we are all agreed as to that one point, I may, I think, flatter myself with the hope of meeting with the general concurrence of every part of the House. Gentlemen will observe, that the motion under discussion does not impute the slightest degree of blame, much less does it call for censure, upon the conduct of His Majesty's Ministers; they may, for any thing this motion infers, have conducted themselves in the important charge which has been committed to their care in such a manner as not only to be blameless, but deserving of the highest approbation; they may have exercised the power with which they have been entrusted with so much wisdom and moderation as to trench as little upon the personal safety of the subject, as was consistent with the security of the State, and would in that case be entitled to our warmest applause: but these are considerations foreign to the subject. Sir, the whole of this question lies within a very narrow compass indeed. This House has judged it fit, and I am not now disputing its judgement, upon the representations of the Minister, of the perilous situation of the State, to entrust to the hands of the Minister a most exorbitant power, confessedly improper, and only to be justified by the extraordinary circumstances of the times; a power, which every one will agree with me in thinking, ought

not to be entrusted to any man for a day—no, nor for an hour, nor for a minute, beyond what that necessity could justify, and which the Minister has now possessed for weeks and months, and even years, taking in its different renewals; for the first act of this kind was passed in the year ninety-four or ninety-five; shall not this House then, which armed the Minister with this tremendous power, which removed all those barriers erected by our ancestors for the protection of our persons, which deprived the subject of the benefit of that great bulwark of personal security, the Habeas Corpus Act, and thus left him naked, bare, and defenceless, and open to the attack of an uncontrollable power delegated from itself; shall it not now think it to be its duty to afford some shadow of protection to the subject, by exercising its inquisitorial functions, and demanding now, towards the expiration of its term, some little account of the use which has been made of it; of the extent at least to which it has been carried. Surely, Sir, the House did not mean it, did not so understand it; it could not intend, when it granted this dreadful power, that no account whatever should be rendered of it. If the House did so mean, so intend, and so understand, better for this country had Parliament never been instituted at all, better for this country quietly to have submitted to all the arbitrary prerogatives laid claim to by the House of Stuart; better had it submitted to have been taxed at the will of the King, without the interference of Parliament, and to have endured all the grievances and vexation of his excise officers and purveyors—better, far better, had it been for our high-spirited ancestors to have preserved their blood in their veins, and not to have lavished, with the profusion they did, the inestimable treasure for rights and privileges, and that very Constitution of Parliament which was shortly afterwards destined tamely to resign them, and, together with its own functions, to make one common deposit at the footstool of the Throne. But, Sir, I hope I should be doing an injury to the House, did I for a moment suspect its conduct would justify such reflections as these; but, Sir, far otherwise—I have great hopes that its determination this night will shew, that it is vigilant and watchful, and desirous of affording its protection to the personal security, at least, of the subject. Indeed, Sir, upon the question now under discussion, so far am I from feeling any apprehension on the score of the vote of the House in favour of this motion, that I even look with confidence for the acquiescence of the Ministers; and, indeed, I should be inclined to believe, that had it not been for the multitude of affairs pressing upon their attention, that they would have rendered this motion altogether unnecessary, by laying, of their own accord, such a list

upon the table, as that I am now going to move for. Sir, thinking I may safely rest the motion upon its own merits, I shall, without detaining you any longer, now move, "That a list be laid upon the table of this House of the names of the persons committed in virtue of an Act, entitled an Act to empower His Majesty to secure and detain such persons as His Majesty shall suspect are conspiring against his person and government, and of the prisons in which they have been confined."

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that when on a former day he had thrown out an objection to the intended motion of the honourable Baronet, the principal object of that objection was, that such a motion should not be permitted to pass by unnoticed merely as a motion of course, and in that light only did he then object to it: and, had he not now reasons in his own mind for not opposing it, he would not, perhaps, from the explanations offered by the honourable Baronet, and from the grounds upon which the motion was supported, be so easily inclined to give it assent. Indeed, on whatever grounds the motion might have been brought forward, he had no difficulty in saying, that the act so pointedly alluded to by the honourable Baronet, had been productive of the most salutary consequences, and therefore it was a matter of much serious consideration whether it were safe to lay aside its operation. As to the use made of it by Government, they did not fear to avow it, though they would not make any such avowal from compulsion; but in the present case, as far as the object of the motion involved no inconvenience, no objection would be made to the disclosure of the names, &c. now called for. He, for one, felt that it might be extremely advisable that such names should be laid before the House, and even the reasons for their imprisonment, though not, perhaps, on account of the motives which actuated the honourable Baronet's motion; for he was far from being adverse to letting the House and the public see what use had been made by Ministers of the discretionary power entrusted to their hands. Upon the whole he was confident that the country had derived the most essential services from it since last session; and however they might feel exempt from doubts or apprehensions, yet he could say that the crisis of danger was so far past as to leave us without a wish to see the same power revived and continued; but he would take an early opportunity of calling the attention of the House to this subject; at present, he would only say, that much of our present security and prosperity had arisen from the wise precautions hitherto adopted, and a due regard to that security and prosperity should make us hesitate on precipitately relinquishing that wise precaution. This

the House would the more anxiously attend to, were they acquainted, as they one day, and soon, should be, with the alarming dangers that threatened even this country; dangers which nothing but the extreme vigilance of Administration could have successfully warded off. Great and ample, indeed, were the powers with which Government had been armed; but the nation, he trusted, was sensible that this power had been wisely and faithfully employed. Upon these topics, however, he would not now enlarge, but content himself with observing, that for the reasons he had advanced, the present motion had his most perfect acquiescence.

The motion was then put and carried.

Tuesday, December 11.

Mr. TIERNEY said:—I rise, Sir, in pursuance of a notice I gave some time past to make a motion, and to submit it to the opinion of the House at this important crisis of public affairs:

“That it is the duty of His Majesty’s Ministers to advise His Majesty against entering into any engagements which may prevent or impede a Negotiation for Peace, whenever a disposition shall be shewn on the part of the French Republic, to treat on terms consistent with the security and interests of the British empire.”

Sir, I trust that you and the House will believe me when I say that no man can be more impressed than I am with the arduous nature of the task I have undertaken; it is, all circumstances considered, to me particularly arduous, for reasons, which are not necessary, all of them, to be stated. I have no other inducement to come forward than that which arises from the consciousness of my duty, nor have I any other motive whatever for what I am now doing, for I am not acting in concert with any other individual whatever, being impelled simply by the sense I feel of my duty, which is to me motive sufficient.

When I look at the situation of our affairs at this moment, and compare it with that which it exhibited some time since, and when I couple that situation with declarations from a variety of quarters, as well as from the highest, which necessarily procured great weight wherever they were known, I own I am impelled to make the motion which I have just read to the House. I am led to think that the pacific disposition which, soon after the conference at Lisle, was manifested by His Majesty’s declaration, has been abandoned, and that a new spirit has begun to rise up, against which I enter my

protest. The spirit I allude to is that which leads to an extensive continental connexion, which may, in the opinion of many very honest men, be advantageous to this country, but which, in my opinion, must be the reverse; and this is a matter of so much importance to the welfare of this country, that I hope the House will not think me too assuming if I request their attention to it.

The House will, I dare say, agree with me in this, that the shortest course I can take upon this occasion is most likely to be the best; and, with that view, I think I cannot do better than to proceed to answering those points which I conceive are likely to be urged as objections to my motion. I take this course, because it appears to me to be the most plain and simple one I can adopt. I have taken all possible pains to learn what objections are likely to be urged against the motion. I have looked them over carefully, and, if I could find that these objections were well founded, I should not have felt any shame; on the contrary, I should have been proud to come forward to acknowledge my error, and to ask pardon of the House for having once called its attention to a motion which I was convinced was improper; but the more I consider the matter, the more I am convinced I was right in my first conception of it.

I know it may be said, that this motion is an encroachment on the prerogative of the Crown, that it breaks in upon the undoubted power which the Crown has of making war or peace; but I think this is a point which will not be much insisted upon when it is considered that the power of this House is unquestionable with respect to granting supplies. I have, as a Member of this House, as good a right to say, that the supplies granted to the Crown shall be granted exclusively for England, as to say, what no man doubts I have a right to say, there shall not be any supply. Nobody disputes that right now; and I apprehend that as little can be said against the other, and therefore the objection that this motion is an encroachment on the prerogative of the Crown is answered.

But it may be said, that this motion has a tendency to damp the spirit which is now rising in Europe. If that spirit was rising, and was likely to animate all Europe against the ambitious projects of the common enemy, I should be so far from wishing to damp it, that I should wish to inspire the ardour of it—I should be the last man in this country who would wish to discourage such a spirit. [A cry of "Hear! Hear!" from the Minister.] But I have no idea that my motion would, if assented to, have any such operation. I say this, because I do not think that there is in Europe that spirit which can be at all affected by such a motion as that which is now

before you. What principle there is to govern the spirit to which I have alluded, I have yet to learn ; by what I have seen, I am led to think there is no symptom of any spirit rising from principle in any quarter ; and I need not say much to convince the House, that the value of any spirit, and even the duration of it, must depend upon the principle on which it is founded : and yet this is called a plan for the general deliverance of Europe. I should be glad to know where I am to look for the spirit which has this tendency ? I have observed the conduct of the powers of the Continent, but I cannot see any thing like this spirit. Look at Prussia ; that power has been at peace now for three years, and the Minister of the French Republic is there now treated with all the respect which nations observe towards those with whom they wish to continue a good understanding ; at least there is no appearance of the want of cordiality between his Prussian Majesty and the French Republic. If we look at the Emperor, we cannot say there is any dispute actually between him and the French. There is, indeed, a Congress held at Radstadt, but that is, I believe, nothing more than a trial for each party to make the best of a mere squabble to the right and left bank of a river. If you look at Russia, you will not see, or, I confess I think you will not see, any thing interesting. In short, I confess I can see nothing from that quarter but profession, in which species of assistance to the common cause, none can go farther than the Court of Petersburg ; but, really, what other exertions have been made from that quarter, I am yet to learn. If we look at the Ottoman Porte, we shall see, at least I can see, nothing like principle in the spirit that has shewn itself. I see, indeed, some resentment expressed against what I undoubtedly consider as a sudden act of injustice. If any body supposes that I do not mean to say the French have been guilty of the most scandalous injustice, he mistakes me very much. But I see nothing in the conduct of the Ottoman Porte, which leads me to think, that the resentment shewn in that quarter is a resentment arising from any principle on which we can reckon for any permanency : on the contrary, it appears to be a spirit that may be appeased by only altering the course of that which produced it. I see nothing like a systematic course of opposition to the ambitious projects of the enemy in general. The spirit of opposition to the enemy there, will discontinue the instant they gain for themselves what they want. They will have no share in the general deliverance of Europe. Waiting, therefore, to hear where this spirit to resist the French is to be seen, and to be better informed in these particulars than I am at present, I shall go on with my observations, believing, as I do in my conscience, that I am

doing no injury whatever to the ardour of any of the powers of Europe. But it may be said, "although this spirit does not yet appear every where, yet your motion ought not to be made, for it may prevent that spirit from being excited, and would not such an effect be dangerous to the general confederacy?" Certainly, if there be such a confederacy as that from which you expect to work the deliverance of Europe; but I apprehend it will be granted to me, that, unless the confederacy be general, it cannot be attended with any extensive advantages. If only one power or two powers exert themselves, none of those splendid objects, of which we have heard a good deal, can be rationally expected to be accomplished. Now, with respect to a general confederacy, I am not speaking at random, or on speculation, for it is a subject on which I have had positive experience; and which experience, under all the circumstances with which it comes before the House, ought to make it cautious, at least, how it acts in future. The great confederacy against France was when the unfortunate Monarch was under trial, and at the time of his death—that was the time when the combined powers were in the greatest force against France; it was then that France was not under the advantages of a settled government; when all that she possessed was employed only to resist actual invasion; when her troops were raw and undisciplined, and when, in short, she had nothing to depend upon, or to oppose to all her difficulties, but the energy of the people. This was the time when the power of a confederacy against France was most formidable to her. Let gentlemen consider what are now the boundaries of the French Republic, and then let them look at what is to be effected by a general confederacy. Circumstances must materially have changed from those of the former before we can reasonably hope for any advantage from a new Confederacy, or before it can produce any effect different from the last; and what that effect was, I have no pleasure in detailing to the House. What produced the discomfiture of the Confederates? The skill of the French, or the jealousy and indecision of the Confederates? Take which you will of these two, and the conclusion will be the same. Shall I be told that the skill of the French is less now than it was then? That their strength is less; that their Generals are less able, their army less steady or less powerful?—I think not, Sir. Now take the other side, the alternative—Is there now a greater probability that the allies will adhere to each other better than they did formerly? Have they a greater ardour for the common cause now than they had then? Look at the relative situation of the different powers. Is it to be believed that Austria will place more confidence in Prussia,

supposing a new confederacy formed, than she did formerly? Can we have more confidence in either of them after we have been deserted by both? Will any gentleman say that we ought to vote larger supplies than any that have yet been voted for the purpose of adjusting this or that point which may belong to the left or the right side of the Rhine? Can any man say that these are points essential to the welfare of Great Britain? Can any of the powers expect much from the co-operation of Russia? Can the Emperor expect much cordial support from those who have deserted him already? Can we look with any degree of hope from the decisive and prompt action of the Ottoman Porte? Will any man lay his hand upon his heart and say, that any of the combinations I have stated can be of real service to Great Britain? Well; but the question is altered, and other nations now feel what their interests are better than they did formerly. Those who reflect on the tenour of State Papers, on the Manifestoes of 1793 and 1794, will do the parties combined against France the justice to say, that whatever they may have failed in, they did not fail in foretelling the enormities of France. Nothing that has happened could have astonished the confederate powers, for they predicted all the evils that have happened in consequence of the anarchy of France—nothing has happened which they did not distinctly foretell; nor did they fail to ascribe all the evils that have happened to French principles—and here it is proper I should explain what I mean by French principles; I think this the more necessary, because they are misunderstood by some, or at least they are differently understood by different persons. Some gentlemen call all desire for a parliamentary or other reform, in any concern to the nation, the result of French principles: with such men I cannot agree. But as to those French principles which have produced, and are supporting the present tyranny of France, no man would rise up sooner than myself to reprobate or rejoice more heartily at the extinction of such a principle. But can you suppose that any thing can be done to inflame the resentment of all these persons more than has been done by the French Republic? Can you suppose that any thing can be done to excite deeper hatred in Monarchy against French principles than the conduct held towards that Monarch? Can you believe that the nobility of any country can have greater anger against any thing than they have against that conduct which abolished their whole order at once, and worked the total destruction of their titles? Do you believe that any thing would make the prayers of the Church more fervent against anarchy than the overthrowing altogether of all Church establishment? Can you imagine any thing more likely to enrage

the lords of manors, and such persons, than the total confiscation of feudal property, and the extinction of feudal rights? These are the men who once united against France; and it is from an union of these again that you look for the deliverance of Europe, as it is called: Can any thing happen to increase their abhorrence of French principles? If there can, I own I do not know what it is; and I shall wait to be informed upon that subject from gentlemen on the other side. I would ask one general question—Can you suppose that you will succeed by this new confederacy in any one thing that will be of the least service to this country, for you really should not embark in any thing, unless you have a distinct object in view? I should be glad to see France driven to her former limits; I should be glad too if I saw her renounce her principle of ambition, and thirst for extent of territory. I am of opinion that she shews the badness of her Government, by endeavouring to spread it; and I think I see the sad nature of her liberty by the eagerness with which she endeavours to extend it to her foes—but can you really believe, that, after having got Mantua, Luxemburgh, and other places, that she is more easily to be driven within her ancient limits than she was before she made these acquisitions? Or will any man say, that this object is to be accomplished without a great evil happening to this country; in short, without such consequences to the finances of this country as the most sanguine calculator cannot look upon without dismay? Where is your line of demarcation to be drawn? But although you are not to be the conquerors of France, but are only to reduce her to her antient limits, do not think that other powers will go on with you, even in that object; they will not aid and assist you in restoring to each other what has been lost; the confederacy, if it be formed, would dissolve long before that object could be accomplished. But, if you could accomplish that object, I am sure you may nevertheless adopt my motion, for there is nothing in it hostile to that idea—there is not a syllable in my motion which goes to prevent the powers of Europe from joining against France; but instead of our endeavouring to extend the confederacy, we should leave them to apply to us. You say, you will bring about the deliverance of Europe. Do not say so—you cannot accomplish it, and I wish you not to make so extravagant an attempt.

Another point that may be urged, is, that my motion tends to prevent others from shewing their principles, and that it tends to decide upon the aggressions of the enemy towards other powers; by which means, it may stand in the way of the assertion of those rights, which lead to honourable terms of peace for this country. This

appears strong at the first sight ; but if I did not conceive there was an answer to it, you would not have had the trouble of hearing me this day, for I would not urge a single argument that could tend to impede honourable terms to this country. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have the goodness always to bear in mind, that the interest and honour of the British empire, or rather, the terms of peace that may favour the interest and honour of the British empire, are points on which I will not say a single word. I do not think it regular or decent to do so ; they are points which always ought to be left to the consideration of Ministers. I think I should be encroaching on the prerogative of the Crown, if I were to say, what is and what is not for the security, the honour, or the interest of the British empire. But although I shall abstain from any declarations of my own upon such topics, yet Ministers have put into His Majesty's mouth, after the breaking off the conference at Lisle, words that are tantamount to the spirit of my motion. His Majesty there says nothing of the general deliverance of Europe. I do not blame the declaration on that account, on the contrary, I applaud it ; and if the spirit held out on that occasion had been kept up, you would not have the trouble of hearing me on the present occasion : it is, because I conceive that such spirit has been departed from, that I come forward with my motion. The House will now be pleased to hear part of His Majesty's declaration, after the breaking up of the conference at Lisle——

“ While this determination continues to prevail, His Majesty's earnest wishes and endeavours to restore peace to his subjects must be fruitless. But his sentiments remain unaltered. He looks with anxious expectation to the moment when the Government of France may shew a disposition and spirit in any degree corresponding to his own. And he renews, even now, and before all Europe, the solemn declaration, that in spite of repeated provocations, and at the very moment when his claims have been strengthened and confirmed by that fresh success which, by the blessing of Providence, has recently attended his arms, he is yet ready (if the calamities of war can now be closed) to conclude peace on the same moderate and equitable principles and terms which he has before proposed—the rejection of such terms must now, more than ever, demonstrate the implacable animosity and insatiable ambition of those with whom he has to contend, and to them alone must the future consequences of the prolongation of the war be ascribed.”

[*Vide* DEBRETTS'S STATE PAPERS, vol. vi. fo. 272 and seq.]

Then, Sir, I may at least ask whether I am not proposing a measure on the plan of that declaration I have laid now before you? I am not proposing any thing that shall bind Government as to terms, but I leave the terms to Government to settle; I am anxious only to renew the spirit of a declaration, which, in my opinion, did honour to His Majesty's Councils at the time it issued. If this motion of mine is to be negatived, I think it is incumbent on those who oppose it, to shew what has altered the course we ought to take; for, until that be done, our sincerity in the new confederacy will be doubted and distrusted. It will be impossible for His Majesty's Ministers to persuade the other powers of Europe that they are endeavouring to deliver them all from the enormity of France, until they are able to erase the seal from the declaration, part of which I have just been reading to the House. If they depart from that declaration, they should state what it is that justifies them for that departure. The principle of the declaration is a very good one; and if Ministers adopt any other, they should assign a reason for so doing. There are but two reasons that I know of than can be applicable to the case—one is, the aggression of the French in Switzerland. No man looks at that event with more horror than I do; no man would do more, if I could do any thing effectual, to counteract it: but, remember that that aggression, great and iniquitous as it was, had not the charms of novelty—Remember it was the same in the case of Venice—[A cry of “Hear! Hear! Hear!”]—Gentlemen may prepare for another cry—I ask, does this spirit of opposition to the common enemy arise from any thing that is new in the course of aggression towards neutral powers? The next reason is the victory of Admiral Nelson; it was most unquestionably great, singular, and glorious; but it should not, in my opinion, change the disposition manifested in that declaration I have recited, after the conference at Lisle; and it should be recollected that the declaration was made after the brilliant victory of Lord Duncan. I say that declaration at that time ought to have been revered, as I hope it was, by all Europe, since it manifested that even exultation and triumph did not stand in the way of His Majesty's dispositions for peace to Europe. Am I to understand that the last splendid achievement of Lord Nelson is to cause a departure from these pacific dispositions, which on a former occasion did so much honour to His Majesty's Councils?

The last objection I believe is, that this motion may operate as a notice to France, that we cannot any farther co-operate with our allies. I say, we should endeavour to make an honourable peace; I do not say what the terms are that will entitle it to that descrip-

tion; that I leave, where I think I ought to leave it, with His Majesty's Ministers, but I do say that when that is capable of being effected, I should be glad to hear any gentleman assign any reason why this war should be continued on our part for one moment. But is it possible for England to continue the war without co-operating with other powers? I say you do co-operate by your naval exertions. Look at your exertions of last year; have you not most effectually co-operated with all who opposed the French last year? Most unquestionably you have. The Chancellor of the Exchequer can paint the effects of our naval triumphs much more beautifully; he can describe them much more eloquently than I can do. But I can desire you to look at the French marine. I can affirm with truth that no man living rejoices more than I do at our naval triumphs. I have to observe also that the French trade is now nearly destroyed; and speaking from my conscience I declare, that in our naval operations we have really done wonders; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself cannot say any thing on that point to which I am not ready to give my hearty assent. By the force of our fleet I am ready to say that we should co-operate with other powers against France; but if by co-operation you mean the sending of troops to the Continent, I here protest against such co-operation. If you send to any of the other powers any pecuniary assistance whatever, either under the title of loan, subsidy, or otherwise; in the name of the comfort, or quiet, or safety of this country, I here protest against it. I do not mean that you should meanly or pusillanimously withdraw from the contest; I am the last man that would council such withdrawing; but we have no necessity to do so; our course is marked out for us; and by pursuing it we shall co-operate most effectually; that is, by the exertion of our naval strength, as we did last year, always bearing in mind that there is not in my motion one word that tends to preventing such co-operation until we shall see an opening for peace; not a momentary cessation of hostilities, but a peace that shall be consistent with the honour, interest, and real security of the British empire.

I recollect one objection more that may be made to my motion; that it states that which no man will dispute, and that, therefore, it is superfluous to vote it, namely, "that an honourable peace is a good thing." It shall be so disposed of if you please; but I shall have gained for the country all I wanted if I gain a renewal of His Majesty's declaration in the year 1797. I should not be satisfied if I said much less, although something less I do say, by the motion which is now before you. I ask for nothing but a renewal of the same pacific temper which was manifested by His Majesty in 1797.

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His Majesty's Ministers are left, as they ought to be, to take care of the terms that may at any time be the result of such a declaration, and they are of course, as they ought to be, to continue responsible for the use they make of the power they possess. But perhaps some gentlemen will answer me, by declaring they think this an unfavourable moment to proclaim to Europe your pacific dispositions—I think otherwise; and I trust no man will say, that this is a mean attempt to sue for peace; and I certainly have no intention it should be so conceived; for I really feel too much of the pride of an Englishman; and participate too much in the triumphs of my countrymen to suppose, that any such thing can be suspected; but between suing for peace, and holding out a sober language of conciliation, there is, I apprehend, a very clear difference. No man would do more than myself to avoid any check upon the national honour, or the national pride; but even these considerations must keep company with others which refer to the situation of our affairs. You should really look at that situation now, and compare it with that of your situation in 1797. Do you see in it any thing that encourages you to proceed and persevere in assisting others upon the Continent? If gentlemen have ever thought it worth their while to think on any thing I have said in this House, they will do me the justice to remember that I never exaggerated or depressed the statement of our finances; I always spoke of them as I thought of them. But I must now say that, great and flourishing as our resources have been, our finances are now in a state which no man who has the interest of this country at heart can think of without anxiety. We are carrying on a war, the expence of which by estimate is 30 millions a year; that is to say, a war in which the expence is two millions and a half every month. In six years you have added nearly 150 millions sterling to your debt, by which you have created the necessity of adding to your annual burdens eight millions, a sum equal to the whole of your expenditure when his present Majesty ascended the Throne. If I were to say that the real addition to your debt will at the end of the present year be 180 millions, I should not go beyond the point; and that the annual expenditure of the country cannot be less than 28, but I will say 26 millions (for I would not provoke discussion on any thing that is incidental to the main design I have in calling the attention of the House to what I submit); but, taking things on the most moderate scale, I do not believe that the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, sanguine as he is, thinks that the affairs of this country can be winded up for a peace establishment without great difficulty. only think for a moment upon the measure before you already, by

which a tenth of every man's income is to be taken under one head, independent of all other imposts, to support the State, and that this subjects every man to the inconvenience of having his accounts examined; and, under these circumstances, think whether it is not worth your while to look a little farther on before you embark and go forward. I have formerly taken the liberty of stating that the great transfer of property in this country must be attended in effects highly detrimental to the English character; that in time you will have a beggared gentry and overgrown merchants, as two classes in your society. We are called *an armed Nation*. I feel as much pride as any Englishman ought to feel at the readiness with which my countrymen shew their attachment to the country by qualifying themselves for defending it by arms; but this is not a condition of things which can continue long in this country—besides, I am apprehensive that it must inevitably increase the influence of the Crown, which is a great evil in its very nature. This must be evident to any one who looks at the collection of our revenue; add to this the effect of having under military discipline, so many who are wanted in the civil affairs of life. Remember, also, that the law has now silenced every man in the country every where except in this House: that the Habeas Corpus Act is suspended, and that no man can say he is free. When all these things are put together, I would ask, am I speaking like a man of integrity or not when I say that the Constitution of England cannot weather such a storm as this much longer than the pockets of the people can hold out against all the claims that are made upon them?

As to the other parts of the empire—Ireland for instance, I shall say but little; but I understand, that, notwithstanding all the efforts to curb and repress rebellion there, farther exertions are still wanted for that purpose. I am here merely hinting at things—I am not to be charged with arguing these points; that I avoid for reasons at which the House may easily guess. If we look at our establishments in the East, we shall see very large expences. With respect to the situation of the enemy, they have now, if not the first, certainly the most successful General in Europe; he is now at the head of a large army in Egypt, where he has been many months without having, as I understand, experienced any very material check, although, as I have said already, he has been there several months—I believe five or six months. Should he come back again to France, and should he turn his mind against this country, I hope we should be able to meet him; but it would be a very serious thing. Then look at the West Indies—and here the first thing that presents itself to my mind is the evacuation of St.

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Domingo. I do not mean the least reproach on the gallant officer who conducted that evacuation : on the contrary, I am happy in the opportunity here presented to me to bear public testimony of the great value of his military services ; and I hope for an opportunity of doing so in private ; but, for reasons that do not call in question the conduct of that able officer, the evacuation of St. Domingo is an alarming thing to those who have any esteem for our West-India possessions. Here was a power to be raised, that cost, as I understand, ten millions of British money, and ten thousand British subjects ! From this frightful expenditure of blood and money, what was the result ? 50 thousand Blacks started up in arms : thus, within a few hours sail of our West-India Colonies, there is a force of no less than 50 thousand blackmen disciplined and trained to arms, and enflamed with enthusiastic notions, concerning liberty. I have no desire to say more on this subject than is necessary to make the thing intelligible. If I had the eloquence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I could make this matter appear most horribly to the House ; even without such powers, I could make this House very uneasy at this subject ; but I have no such thing in view : my object is answered, if I impress on your mind, Sir, that from the relative situation of the British empire, we have enough to do for ourselves, without embarking in any intermediate scheme for the deliverance of Europe. We have been concerned now for six years, in what is called the common cause, for no determinate object that I ever could see. It is time for us now to have some separate care of ourselves, by which I do not mean any pusillanimous or dastardly desertion of the contest ; but that whenever France shall, by force of arms, or otherwise, become moderate and rational in her public views, we may be in a situation to meet her on the scale of prudence and discretion.

Feeling as I do, for the glory of England, as a man, as a Member of Parliament, I could not take notice of the expression in the speech from the Throne, relating to our own energy and virtue, without wishing that such energy and virtue should be employed in our own behalf, and not to be made in any degree dependent on the energy and virtue of others ; I say, let England pursue the same conduct as she did last year, and she will pursue her interest, and, perhaps, may bring about tranquillity ; but if we go on with loose and indefinite notions of the deliverance of Europe, such will be the certain charge of it, that I have no difficulty in saying, that the effect will be a load and a weight which no resources you have, or can have, will enable you to bear. The resources of this country are, thank God, very great ; but perhaps

much of that arises out of, and is attributable to the general convulsed state of Europe; if so, we ought to be the more careful of our means. People may praise the resources of this country as much as they please, but we must not disguise from ourselves our real situation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has too much candour and sincerity to deny that he must have great difficulties in winding up the accounts of this country. I shall give no farther opinion upon this point. When the energy of this country rises to its height, I hope it will not be employed in any visionary projects, but will be directed to a clearly defined point for the interest of Great Britain. I have now to thank the House for its kind attention. I have, perhaps, trespassed farther than I should have done, but the House will feel some advantage from its indulgence to me; for unless something should be said to-night, of which at present I have no conception, I shall not avail myself of the customary privilege of speaking again. I thought it was my duty to say thus much. If the French could be driven within their antient limits, no man would more heartily rejoice than I should; but if any calamity should follow the steps that are to be pursued on behalf of this country, it is a consolation to me that I have lifted up my voice, feeble as it is, with the best endeavours to promote the real interests of my country.

Mr. Tierney concluded by making his motion as before stated.

Mr. CANNING rose and said:—Mr. Speaker, If I might judge of the impression made by the honourable gentleman's speech, from the manner in which it has been received, and particularly from the unusual degree of apathy and languor which has prevailed on that side of the House on which he sits; I should be led to believe, that the ardour manifested on this side of the House by my noble and honourable friends who rose at the same time with me, was, perhaps, more than the occasion required:—and I assure you, Sir, I should not have pressed myself upon your attention, if I had thought the occasion one which demanded abilities like theirs;—if I had not felt, that what arguments I have to state in opposition to the honourable gentleman's motion, are so clear and plain in themselves, as to require little aid from any talents in the person who states them.

The motion of the honourable gentleman cannot be denied to be of an extraordinary nature; and he has certainly treated it in a very extraordinary manner. I conceive it to be consonant as well to the rules of the House, as the reason of the thing, that the House should not be urged to the adoption of a new and unusual measure, with-

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out its being, in the first place, established, that there exists some necessity for adopting it, or that some advantage may be gained by doing so. I did expect, therefore, from the honourable gentleman, rather some solid reasons for the measure which he has proposed, than an anticipation of the objections which he thought might be urged against it. He has contented himself, however, with endeavouring to destroy the validity of several arguments which he has heard out of doors, and which he expects to hear to-night against the motion that he has made; but he has omitted, what seemed to me to be more peculiarly incumbent upon him, an explanation of the motives which induced him to make it.

I admit that the honourable gentleman has been not unsuccessful in anticipating several of the most obvious and prominent objections against his motion; I cannot think that he has been equally fortunate in removing them. I shall certainly have occasion, in the course of what I have to say, to restate many or most of those which he has anticipated, and not without the hope of establishing them to the conviction of the House. I shall follow him through these objections, as nearly as I can, in the same order in which he has brought them forward.

The first objection which he expects to hear, but upon which I am certainly not inclined to lay the greatest stress, is the point of constitutional form. It is by no means my intention to contend, that the nature of the honourable gentleman's motion, though extraordinary, is wholly unprecedented,—much less to deny the power and the right of the House of Commons, to offer its advice to His Majesty, on any subject, either of negotiation, or of war. I know they have at several times interfered in both. It is, indeed, somewhat singular, that the honourable gentleman should not himself have cited any of the former instances of such an exercise of the right of Parliament. Perhaps he has some recollection, that a peculiar sort of fatality has, in almost every instance, seemed to attend interferences of this nature; that in almost every instance, from the Revolution to our own time, they have been either nugatory or mischievous.

I will mention two only, out of the few that have occurred during this period: the first,—that which was nearest, in point of time, to the Revolution; the other,—that which is nearest to our own time; the first, an interference tending to prolong a war; the other, intended to accelerate a peace.

The first, the warlike measure, was the famous vote of the House of Lords in 1707, “That no peace could be safe or honourable
“ which should leave Spain and the Spanish West Indies in the

“possession of the House of Bourbon.” It is hardly necessary to remind gentlemen, that this vote, carried by the heat and violence of party, had no effect whatever; that no manner of regard was paid to it, in the peace which was afterwards negotiated:—And, whatever might be the faults of that peace, or however loud the cry against the Ministers who made it, I do not think that any man, who looks fairly and impartially at that peace now, will say, that it was any very great crime in those Ministers, that they did omit to carry this vote into execution.

The second example to which I refer, is the resolution voted by the House of Commons, respecting the “Independence of America.” Of a transaction so recent it is hardly possible to speak with the freedom of history. I speak, probably, in the presence of many who took part in favour of that revolution,—of some certainly, who opposed it. Who were right, or who were wrong, I do not presume to determine. But in one thing, I believe, those who opposed and those who promoted it will equally concur,—that the vote which carried that resolution was an *unfortunate* vote; and that it had an influence fatal to the interest of this country, on the peace which concluded the American war. This is a proposition which those who had to make that peace must, I am sure, contend to be true; and which those who condemned that peace would find it difficult to deny.

But whatever might be the force of precedents, they would not of themselves,—even if their bearing was as much in favour of motions of this kind, as unfortunately it has been against them,—they would not of themselves be sufficient to justify the honourable gentleman’s motion. It would, I presume, be farther necessary for him to shew (as was shewn, or attempted to be shewn, in all former instances) that some necessity at present exists, which calls for such an interference of the House of Commons.

I can conceive such a necessity to arise only from one of two circumstances: either from the circumstance of some opening for peace now presenting itself, of which Ministers do not shew themselves enough disposed to take advantage;—or from Ministers having at former periods evinced a disposition generally hostile to peace, which this motion is intended to censure or to controul.

That any such opening now exists, the honourable gentleman has not attempted to argue. I must, therefore, naturally have attributed his motion to a false impression remaining on his mind of the conduct of Ministers in former negotiations:—I must have conceived, that he retained a confused and perplexed recollection of what had passed at Lisle,—that he remembered something indistinctly of an embarrassment having been thrown in the way of the

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negotiation by a question about *Allies*,—but utterly forgot that the allies who created this embarrassment were the allies of France and not of Great Britain;—and that, under this mistake, he was bringing forward the restriction in the wrong place, and applying to this country, a cure for the misconduct of the enemy. But I am prevented from admitting even this foundation for his proceeding, by the approbation which the honourable gentleman has expressed of the Manifesto published by this Government after the breaking off of the negotiations at Lisle. The honourable gentleman distinctly and fairly acknowledges that Manifesto to have exhibited undoubted proofs of the pacific dispositions of His Majesty's Ministers.

And here give me leave to observe rather a singular argument, which grows out of the honourable gentleman's peculiar conduct and situation. He tells you that he brings forward this motion as an "unconnected and unsupported individual," acting with no party or set of men whatever. By agreeing to the motion, therefore, the advantage which we are to gain is his individual co-operation. It is hardly to be supposed that he will be more convinced of the pacific disposition of Ministers after this resolution shall have been adopted, than he was after the publication of the Manifesto, which he has so warmly commended. What was the first step that he took by way of co-operation after that Manifesto was published? *He voted against the supply.*—Convinced, that His Majesty had done all in his power to obtain peace;—that he had gone almost beyond what could have been expected of him, in forbearance and moderation;—that he had shewn even after the victory of Lord Duncan, the most decided disposition to make peace, upon fair and reasonable terms;—convinced, that the abrupt conclusion of the negotiation at Lisle had been the act of the enemy exclusively;—that the continuance of the calamities of war was to be attributed to the arrogance, and wickedness, and pride, of the enemy alone;—that His Majesty had no choice;—that he must of necessity continue to carry on a war which the mad ambition of that enemy would not allow him to terminate:—in this conviction, to enable His Majesty to carry on the war, the honourable gentleman "unconnected and unsupported," individually, *voted against the supply.*

I do not mean to impeach the honourable gentleman's conduct in this instance. He had no doubt his reasons for it. But I do mean to put it to the judgement of the House, whether, if it should be evident (as I trust it will be) that no solid and general advantage is to be derived to the country from our agreeing to the honourable gentleman's resolution,—there is much temptation held out to us

to do so, by the prospect of his future individual co-operation; whether it is worth while to adopt an unusual, unnecessary, and much more a mischievous measure to evince our desire for peace,—in order to secure the honourable gentleman's *vote against the supply* for carrying on the war. This, however, would certainly be a very inferior consideration, if there were any utility or advantage to be derived from the measure proposed. I have not heard the honourable gentleman state any advantage as likely to arise from it to the country. As he has affirmed nothing of this kind, I have nothing of the kind to deny. But there is one way of considering what is advantageous to this country, to which I confess I am very partial; and the rather, perhaps, because it does not fall in with the new and fashionable philosophy of the day. I know it is a doctrine of that large and liberal system of ethics which has of late been introduced into the world, and which has superseded all the narrow prejudices of the antient school,—that we are to consider not so much what is good for our country, as what is good for the *human race*; that we are all children of one large family;—and I know not what other fancies and philanthropies, which I must take shame to myself for not being able to comprehend. I, for my part, still conceive it to be the paramount duty of a British Member of Parliament to consider *what is good for Great Britain*:—and where no immediate advantage is pointed out as obviously arising from any new measure that is proposed for our adoption,—I hold it no bad test to examine in what way it bears upon the interests of *France*, and to conclude, however unphilosophically, or illiberally, that what is good for *the Enemy*, cannot be very good for *Us*.

Now, Sir, I beg to have it understood,—and I assure the honourable gentleman, that I am very far from meaning any thing personally disrespectful to him;—that I give him full credit for feeling, as strongly as any man, every thing that he owes to his country, for being as ready as any man to devote his talents and exertions to her service. I appeal, therefore, not to his feelings, but to his judgement and ingenuity,—when I desire him to consider, whether he could possibly devise any measure (capable, at the present moment, of being patiently entertained by this House or by the Public) which should have a more direct and manifest tendency to benefit France, than the motion which he has now brought forward? What could any man—any Member of this House, (if it were possible to suppose that there should be such a Member in this House) most perversely divoted to the views of the enemy, and bent upon exalting France at the expence of Great Britain,—what more effec-

tual measure could such a man take for such a purpose, than by a motion like the present?

For what is it that the French Directory appear, by all their conduct, by all their publications, to dread and deprecate more than any other thing in the world? What is it that all their official and unofficial papers most labour to discredit? What—but the revival of a great and general confederacy in Europe, of which England should be the animating soul? Why should we co-operate with the French Directory? What interest can we have in common with them, that should induce us to take their work out of their hands and complete it for them? What advantage can it be to us to daunt and dispirit Europe; and to relieve the Directory from the apprehension of any powerful resistance, or the necessity of any extensive preparation; to maintain their influence abroad, and their authority at home?

I will put the question in another way. I will suppose that we were now in the last year of the Monarchy of France, instead of the sixth or seventh year, or whatever it may be, of the *French Republic, One and Indivisible*. By the Monarchy I mean, of course, that cruel, wicked, profligate, abominable despotism, of which we have heard so many, and, no doubt, so just complaints,—which oppressed France with I know not what unheard-of cruelties,—which insulted England, and desolated Europe, by crimes and calamities such as can never be imputed to the French Republic. I will suppose that this Monarchy had received so formidable a blow as has been given to the Directory by the Victory of the Nile;—that its fleets had been disgraced and defeated, in different expeditions against the British empire;—that its fairest provinces were in revolt;—that its subjects were universally discontented;—that its commerce was extinguished;—its revenue destroyed;—and its finances, by the confessions of its ablest financiers, in a state of utter and irrecoverable ruin and bankruptcy;—that against the Monarchy, thus situated, a general spirit was rising in Europe:—I will suppose that, under these circumstances, the Ministers of this country had come down to this House, and suggested the propriety of such a measure of abjuration and self-denial as is now under consideration; and I will ask,—what would have been the clamour raised on the other side of the House?—how pointedly would the question have been put to Ministers, ‘What are you doing? Why do you interfere to arrest the downfall of this detestable tyranny? Look on only—do nothing—and it will fall of itself. What business is it of yours to rescue from destruction a power, so inordinate in its ambition, and so hostile to the happiness of Europe?’

Such would have been the language that we should have heard, if the Monarchy of France had been the object of forbearance, and if Ministers had been the persons to advise us to forbear. I will not press similar interrogations in such a way as to impute to any gentleman improper and unjustifiable partialities:—but I cannot help asking, whether the *present* Government of France be indeed one, which has deserved so well of this country,—which, to take the question more candidly, has deserved so well of France,—which, in the still more large and liberal cant of the day, has deserved so well of *Humanity*—as that we should feel ourselves called upon to take so extraordinary a step in its behalf? And I would farther ask, whether,—whatever be the present degree of weakness or stability in the Government of France, (upon which I give no opinion)—whether the effect of this motion must not be to prop its power, and to come to the aid of its unpopularity; whether, with this vote of security in one hand, the Directory might not boldly hold out the Gazette of Lord Nelson's victory in the other, and call upon the people of France to balance what had been lost with what had been gained?

But admitting, for the argument's sake, the object of the honourable gentleman's motion to be advantageous to this country; it would remain to be seen how far that object is clearly expressed or understood, and how far the means which he suggests are calculated for attaining it. The honourable gentleman takes credit to himself for not limiting or defining, in any degree, the nature or terms of the peace which it is the duty of His Majesty's Ministers to conclude. If he had not mentioned this omission as a point on which he takes credit to himself, it is that which I should have been tempted to select for peculiar disapprobation. It seems to me at least a new and unusual course of policy, instead of defining the end, to contract the means of action. It would have seemed more natural and more fair, to say beforehand, 'Such or such is the peace with which the country would be contented, and which would be consistent with its security and interests; but the mode of arriving at that peace, is what must be left for His Majesty's Ministers to devise,'—this surely would be fairer than to say, in the language of the present motion, 'I will not tell you what peace you ought to make;—but I will take from you one great instrument for making any peace at all.'

By this motion what advice do you give to Ministers, or what control do you impose on them? Your advice is certainly not worth much,—when you only tell them how they shall *not* proceed; but say nothing of how they *shall* proceed, or whether they shall go. Your control cannot be very effectual,—since it is *they*,

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it seems, after all, who are to remain the judges of what is "consistent with the security and interests" of Great Britain.

These interests and this security must necessarily be considered with relation to the different circumstances of the Enemy and of Europe. What might be a secure peace for Great Britain with France reduced in power, and Europe at liberty,—would no doubt be highly unsafe against France in her present state of force and aggrandizement, with great part of Europe at her feet, and the resources of other nations at her disposal. It is equally clear, that it would be more difficult for us, single and unassisted, to extort from France such terms as would be consistent with our interests, than to obtain the same terms, if backed by a powerful confederacy in Europe.

The declaration conveyed to France by this motion, that we are determined, at all events, to treat singly, would naturally inflame her pride, and increase her demands. The declaration that we make no common cause with other nations, would necessarily place those nations at her mercy, or on her side.

The effect of the motion must therefore be to diminish alike the probable advantages of the peace to be obtained, and our power of obtaining it. It prescribes a more difficult end to be accomplished, with less efficacious means. At the same time, it does not tend to hasten the conclusion of even such a peace, as with such means might possibly be obtained; for it leaves Ministers at liberty to conclude no peace, which *they* do not think "consistent with the security and interests" of the country:—and if they should choose to think, (which they very probably and very laudably might,) that no peace would deserve this character, which should not provide for the safety of Europe;—what assurance does this motion give you against a hopeless prolongation of the war?

Sir, the honourable gentleman's purpose, if I at all comprehend it, required that he should have made the latter part of his motion as distinct as the beginning. If he had done so,—if he had fairly stated the idea which he has in his own mind,—I apprehend that, instead of the circumlocution, of a peace "consistent with security and interests," &c. we should have heard of a *separate peace*.

I confess, this was what I was prepared to expect. I expected it the rather, from comparing the general reasoning of the honourable gentleman with respect to *separate war*,—with what is reported to have been said upon the same topic in another place by a noble Statesman of great consideration and celebrity—a Statesman, who to a life of political activity has had the advantage of adding an age of retirement and reflection.

This great authority (I understand) recommended, as the only sort of war that suited the circumstances of this country,—a tight, snug, little, domestic war; in which our exertions should be confined at home; in which we should not stretch an arm beyond the circumference of our own dominions, but should sit down with our navy collected about us, and turn round upon our own axis, without reference to the rest of the world. The main advantage stated as likely to result from this system was, that *our sailors would spend their wages at home*:—the noble Statesman ought to have added, to heighten the glowing picture, that they would spend them in *excisable commodities*.

This system of *separate war* was evidently calculated to lead ultimately to *separate peace*: as, indeed, its illustrious promulgator avowed. I imagined that the honourable gentleman, in adopting the premises of the noble Statesman, must be prepared likewise to adopt his conclusion. I should certainly disapprove of both—because I cannot but apprehend that a war so very like peace would lead to a peace that would be very like war—that a contest (if contest it might be called) in which we should be afraid to employ our forces, would lead to a pacification at which we should be afraid to disband them. And this opinion I venture to entertain, in opposition to such high authority; because I think I have on my side the eternal and immutable truth,—that the objects of human desire are attainable only by human exertion;—that never yet did inaction beget repose, or a want of energy and spirit secure permanent and unmolested tranquillity.

The system of separation, however, is defended upon another ground. It is conceded with great candour, that the conduct of France is *very bad*; but it is at the same time contended, that the other powers of Europe are *very bad too*; and that the less we have to do with either of them, the better. I must take leave, Sir, in the first place, to observe upon the affectation, which has grown up among those who argue against the war, of *pairing-off* the enormities of France against the imputed crimes of regular Governments. No sooner is any fresh act of atrocity, cruelty, perfidy, or injustice, on the part of the French Republic brought forward in argument, than recourse is had to some stale trite topic of declamation, which has been used a hundred and a hundred times, against Russia, Prussia, Austria, or the Old Government of France. During Roberfpierre's reign, the favourite *pair* for every one of his *noyades*, and *fusillades*, his crowded dungeons, and sweeping executions,—was the imprisonment of La Fayette! The partition of Poland too!—(a measure which I have no thoughts of justifying) against how many de-

testable, impious, and tyrannical outrages, invasions, confiscations, rapines, and massacres, of the French Government, has not the partition of Poland been cited as a parallel! It has really, Sir, been called into service so often, that it ought no longer to be considered as a *pair*. It is time to agree, that at least in any future enormities of France, she shall not have a set-off in the partition of Poland.

But after all, to what does this argument at best amount? The world is a bad world, and we are, therefore, to withdraw ourselves from it. Good:—if this were, indeed, practicable; if it remained for us to choose whether we would make a part of this world or no;

“ If Heav’n would make us such another world

“ Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,”——

where all should be pure, and perfect, and without a flaw. But if we are, in spite of ourselves, compelled to belong to the world in which we are placed, I know not whether it be not more manly, more statesman-like, and more virtuous too, to make the best of it;—to do what we can with the materials which we have; and to endeavour to work out our own happiness,—even though we should not be able to separate and disconnect it from the happiness of our fellow creatures.

I think this a more rational conduct than the sort of *national secession* which the honourable gentleman’s motion goes to recommend. I know of no justifiable reason for such a *secession*,—I can conceive no motive for it, consistent with true sense of right, and just dignity of character. I know not how we could reconcile it to ourselves (if it were practicable) to withdraw into gloomy solitude, and “grim repose:” while we have talents which God has given us for the benefit of our fellow creatures, and while we have a station which affords us an opportunity of employing those talents to that purpose. It is not under such circumstances that I can conceive it to be excusable, to indulge a whim, and fretfulness, and peevishness of temper, from personal spleen and petty resentment, because every thing does not go exactly as we would have it. I can conceive no cause, except sullen discontent, and disappointed ambition, which could lead us to abjure communion with mankind.

For discontent, as a nation, God be thanked, we have no ground! Ours has been a generous ambition,—and it has not been disappointed. It has not been disappointed so far as we are ourselves concerned; but it looks to larger and more elevated objects,—to the peace and prosperity of the world.

If, indeed, the full gratification of ambitious views were a suf-

sufficient reason for retirement, we might fairly and proudly retire, and say, with truth and confidence, that we have acted our part. If we had undertaken the war for territorial aggrandizement,—if we had been impelled to it by a thirst of naval glory,—we might, indeed, sit down contented with our conquests, when there is scarcely any thing left for us to acquire, we might pause, satiated with victory, when we have no longer an enemy to subdue. But we did not undertake the war for these objects. Undertake it, indeed, we did in no sense: it was forced upon us by the aggression and ambition of our enemy: we were compelled to engage in it for our safety and defence,—not in local, partial, and insulated points; but in those points in which our safety is connected and bound up with the safety, honour, and interests of Europe.

‘But what,’ say the gentlemen on the other side of the House, ‘is the distinct *object* for which we are engaged?’—Gentlemen put this question,—as if an *object* were a corporeal substance, as if it were something tangible, something that could be taken in the hand and laid upon your table, and turned round and round before them for accurate, ocular, examination. In this sense, I profess myself perfectly unable to satisfy them. But do they mean something less precise than this, (though scarcely less so)—the statement of some one distinct term, the obtaining of which is to be settled before-hand as a *sine quâ non* condition of peace? If they do mean this, are they really prepared to argue that such a statement, supposing it could be made, would be politic, would be prudent,—particularly with a view to the facilitating or accelerating a pacification? Do they not believe,—is it not evident,—that if it had any effect, it would have an effect exactly the contrary? Do they think that the resolution of 1707, for instance, to which I have already referred, had a tendency to promote, or to retard peace? That resolution, indeed, we know was not adhered to. Was it then politic to have passed it? Or, would the gentlemen be contented with the statement of an *object* to which we did *not* mean to adhere? Would they gain any thing by *this*? Would *this* give facility to peace, or vigour to war? Would it contribute to any possible purpose that could be in any way beneficial to the country?

That we *have* objects, great and momentous objects, in our view, there is no man that must not feel. I can have no difficulty in declaring, that the most complete and desirable termination of the contest would be the *deliverance of Europe*. I am told, indeed, that there are persons who affect not to understand this phrase; who think there is something confused, something involved, something of studied ambiguity and concealment in it. I cannot undertake to

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answer for other gentlemen's powers of comprehension. The map of Europe is before them.—I can only say, that I do not admire that man's intellects, and I do not envy that man's feelings, who can look over that map without gathering some notion of what is meant by the *deliverance of Europe*.

I do not envy that man's feelings, who can behold the sufferings of Switzerland, and who derives from that sight no idea of what is meant by the *Deliverance of Europe*. I do not envy the feelings of that man, who can look without emotion at Italy,—plundered, insulted, trampled upon, exhausted, covered with ridicule, and horror, and devastation ;—who can look at all this, and be at a loss to guess what is meant by the *Deliverance of Europe*. As little do I envy the feelings of that man, who can view the people of the Netherlands driven into insurrection, and struggling for their freedom against the heavy hand of a merciless tyranny, without entertaining any suspicion of what may be the sense of the word *Deliverance*. Does such a man contemplate Holland groaning under arbitrary oppressions and exactions ? Does he turn his eyes to Spain trembling at the nod of a foreign master ? And does the word *Deliverance* still sound unintelligibly in his ear ? Has he heard of the rescue and salvation of Naples by the appearance and the triumphs of the British fleet ? Does he know that the Monarchy of Naples maintains its existence at the sword's point ? And is his understanding, and is his heart, still impenetrable to the sense and meaning, of the *Deliverance of Europe* ?

Sir, that we shall succeed in effecting this general *deliverance*, I do not pretend to affirm. That in no possible case we should lay down our arms and conclude a peace before it is fully effected, I do not mean to argue. But that this is the *object* which we ought to have in view, even if we look to our own safety only,—that of this we ought to accomplish as much, as our means, our power, our exertions, our opportunities will allow,—I do most anxiously contend. If circumstances should unhappily arise to make the attainment of the object hopeless, it will be time enough when they do arise, to give up the hopes of attaining it :—but do not let us run before misfortune, do not let us presume disappointment, and anticipate the necessity of disgrace !

But it is contended, and justly contended, that the *deliverance of Europe* cannot be effected by *our* exertions alone : and that, unless other powers are sincerely disposed to co-operate, we are setting out on a romantic and absurd and impracticable enterprize, which we have neither any chance of accomplishing, nor any duty or call to undertake. I perfectly agree, that if other powers are not disposed

to co-operate, we have no reasonable chance of succeeding to the extent of our wishes. But I cannot help asking, at the same time—If there be no such disposition on the part of other powers, where is the use or what is the necessity for the honourable gentleman's motion? Why need Parliament interfere to prevent His Majesty's Ministers from taking advantage of dispositions which do not exist, and from accepting co-operation which will not be offered? But if, on the other hand, the powers of Europe, or any of them, are ready to do their part towards the common salvation, and want but our countenance and encouragement to begin; if the train is laid,—if the sparks of enmity and resentment which the aggressions of France have kindled in every nation throughout Europe want but our breath to blow them into conflagration;—is it the dictate of our duty, our interest, or our feelings, to save France from destruction,—and by a coarse and hasty proceeding, like that which is now recommended to us, *to throw a wet blanket on the flames?*

If, however, the co-operation of allies should be offered, we are called upon to receive them with suspicion and distrust; and to be assured, from the fate of former confederacies, from the manner in which we have been duped and deceived heretofore, that no fidelity to engagements, and no consistency of conduct, is to be expected from the continental powers.

It seems to me that this is rather a hard, unfair, and hasty judgement. When it is contended, that because Austria and Prussia have been unfaithful to our alliance, and have made peace at different times in a manner equally inconsistent with their engagements and their interests,—Russia and the Porte must therefore be considered as equally faithless, equally worthless allies, as powers on whom no reliance can be placed, and from whose exertions no advantage can be expected;—when the errors of the guilty are thus made to furnish a ground of presumption against the innocent:—I have too much respect for the honourable gentleman, to say that he reasons falsely, or feebly;—but I must say, that if I had ever happened to meet with such a train of reasoning, upon any other subject, in any other place, I should have had little hesitation in condemning it as illogical and inconclusive.

Of the treatment, indeed, which the Ottoman Porte receives, I think we have some reason to complain. Gentlemen seem to think that when they have quoted the words of His Majesty's speech, “the vigour and decision of the Ottoman Porte,” they have entirely settled the question; that they have stated something obviously and palpably absurd and ridiculous:—and the smile with which this quotation is received by those who surround them, must very

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much encourage them in that idea. They seem to think, that because the Grand Seignior wears a long beard and a long gown, and is altogether a figure such as we are not accustomed every day to contemplate,—to expect vigour and decision, or good sense or sound policy, from him, is an expectation in the highest degree wild and fantastical.

I cannot, for my life, bring myself to understand where all this ridicule lies. I know not why the Grand Seignior should not take as correct a view of his interests, as any other power whose customs may be more conformable to our own. I am sure that the declaration (which we have all seen) of the motives which have guided the conduct of the Porte, is as able and masterly a composition, as correct in principles of justice, and as sound in principles of policy, as any state paper that ever was published by any Cabinet of Europe. And if the dress and decorations of the Turk be all that strikes the honourable gentleman as ridiculous;—I know not why I should forbear to take the benefit that might result to my arguments, from calling your attention to the antic mummeries and tri-coloured trumpery of the enlightened Executive Directory of France. But I know, if I were to do so, Sir, I should be censured as illiberal, unphilosophical, and—(there is another word in fashion which I had almost forgotten) *uncandid*. Allow me, Sir, only to claim the same candour and liberality for the Turk.

But your Turk is a Mahometan, it seems, and therefore an ally not fit for a Christian!—I do not know, Sir, but an alliance with a Mahometan may be as good as a peace with an Atheist; the sanction of its engagements may, perhaps, be as sacred, and its stipulations as likely to be fulfilled.

But he is a sluggish Turk; slow to anger, and hard to be driven into action. If that be his character, what must be the provocations which have roused him!

But then comes the worst of all:—the Turks and Russians are naturally enemies; and yet here we find them most unnaturally allied together against a common enemy. In the first place, Sir, it is a little hard, that, when *in favour* of France, all notions of received and established policy, and of the balance of power in Europe, are to be utterly disregarded, and put out of the question,—there is yet to be no combination *against* France but upon principles strictly conformable to them. But after all, what is there in this argument? What does it prove,—but that the aggressions of France have been so multiplied, so various, and so extraordinary, as to unite against her powers the most opposite in nature and in interest, as to make the necessity of resistance, and the duty of self-

preservation supersede every narrower consideration, every motive of more particular and contracted policy?

Did gentlemen suppose, then, that there is such a magic force in the hostility of France, that if she attacks, at the same time, two powers, naturally enemies to each other, the recollection of their previous hostility shall deprive each of them of the capacity of self-defence? Did any body ever see, or hear, or read of an instance of such rooted, and unconquerable, and unreasonable antipathy? Can they conceive this in individual instances? If a man comes against me with a sword stained with the blood of my enemy, am I therefore to make no resistance to his attack?

For our *old allies*, however, it is taken for granted that no apology can be made. No good reason (it is contended) can be given, why *they* should now be more worthy of our confidence, more steady to our interests and their own, than they have proved themselves in the former confederacy. The honourable gentleman has anticipated an argument which he is apprehensive may be drawn from the change of circumstances in Europe, and from the conviction which is grown up within this last year, respecting the real views and intentions of France. This argument the honourable gentleman has anticipated, and declares he sees nothing in it. The honourable gentleman is right in his anticipation. I certainly am disposed to use this argument; and I certainly am equally disposed to differ from the honourable gentleman, as to its force and validity.

I would ask the honourable gentleman, I would ask every man in the House, whether he does not know—personally and intimately know—many individuals in this country, the whole course and current of whose ideas, with respect to France, have of late been entirely changed? Does he not believe that the invasion of Switzerland, for instance, that the profligate, swindling transaction with America, that the event of the negotiation at Lisle, worked a great change in the public mind in this country? Is not the honourable gentleman acquainted with great and illustrious converts among what some persons have deemed the most able, the most enlightened, and most respectable characters of the age? And by what rule, either of justice or of reason, does the honourable gentleman propose to limit the benefits of experience to his own countrymen alone?

Is it not possible that the Statesmen of Austria or of Prussia may have caught some light from what has passed upon the Continent of Europe? May not Baron Thugut or Count Haugwitz have declared, (though not, perhaps, in a *public tavern*,) at Berlin or Vienna, that “*France has thrown off the mask, if ever she wore it*?”

Would not *they* be to be believed if they had made such a declaration? Is there any thing that should make *their* profession incredible, and *their* conviction suspicious? Or is it to the enlightened wisdom, to the penetrating and perspicacious sagacity, to the firm and inflexible virtue of our own patriot Statesmen alone, that we would confine the plea of credulity, and restrict the privilege of recantation?

I, Sir, do not see the justice of such a restriction and limitation; and I confess I should try the sincerity of such a recantation by one test alone;—by observing whether or not it were followed by any *act* that corresponded with its spirit and its meaning.

It has been observed by ancient philosophers, that if virtue could be brought to perfection and consummation in any human mind, the possessor of it would still be an imperfect creature, forasmuch as the consciousness of his own excellence would weaken in him one of the first and most amiable qualities of human nature—the indulgence for the frailties of his fellow-creatures. It is, I suppose, from some such cause as this, that the gentlemen on the other side of the House shew themselves so little indulgent to the failings and errors of our allies. Conscious that nothing of French artifice, or French wickedness, could deceive or impose upon *them*, they cannot forgive the folly and stupidity of those who have suffered themselves for a moment to be so deluded: nay, they are hardly content to ascribe the delusion to folly; but are forward to insinuate a suspicion of sympathy and fellow-feeling with France.

We, Sir, who have not the same consciousness of infallibility in ourselves, are naturally averse from such suspicion, and more disposed to make good-natured allowances. And I protest for one, that if the Ministers whom I have mentioned, Baron Thugut, and Count Haugwitz,—nay, if even their masters, the Emperor and the King of Prussia, had pledged themselves yet deeper to a mistaken opinion of France;—if the forms of the House had admitted of their being brought to your bar, and there, Sir, before God and the country, swearing *upon their oaths and upon their honour*, that they believed—nay, swearing that they *always would continue* to believe,—that the Government of France was the *gentlest, quietest, purest, noblest, faithfullest, best* of Governments;—that it *abhorred and detested above all things, the idea of foreign interference* with the government of other countries;—that the character of the Directory had something in it of *peculiar candour, ingenuity, and openness*;—that they (the witnesses) spoke to these facts from their own certain knowledge,—for that they had *lived upon terms of the most confidential intercourse* with the Directory, and *their communication had been*

*almost entirely upon subjects of a political nature :—*If, I say, Sir, such had been the testimony in favour of France, given with all the solemnity of an oath, by the great personages to whom I have referred ;—I should yet be willing to allow some credit to their asseveration, if they were now to come forward and tell us, that the circumstances of the conduct of France since the time when this testimony was given, —that, above all, the *declarations and confession of France herself*, had completely changed their opinion ; had detected the fraud which had been practised upon their judgement, and had convinced them of the profligacy, the atrocity, and the hypocrisy of the Directory.

I say, Sir, I should be willing to give full credit to this penitent retraction. I should be willing even to profit by their offers of future co-operation against France. Nor do I well see on what ground the honourable gentlemen could reject such offers, unless they are prepared to argue (which if they are, on their own judgements be the responsibility, —I do not presume to give any opinion for or against such a proposition) that ‘ no man who has once been contaminated ‘ by the communion of French principles, —who has been drawn, ‘ however innocently or mistakenly, into an approbation and encouragement of persons acting upon these principles, —can ever again ‘ be a sound man.’

I, for my part, should in such a case incline to believe the recantation sincere, and to act upon it as such ; —unless indeed at the moment of making it the same person were to say to me, “ I do “ not, however, so much disapprove French principles in them- “ selves: *I only doubt the propriety of their application.*” —Then, indeed, I admit, that I should distrust him again as much as ever.

So much, Sir, as to the particular argument that the past conduct of our former allies ought to lead us to withhold all credit from their future professions. There is, however, another and a more general argument, comprehending alike these and the other powers of Europe ; which, but that it has been stated by the honourable gentleman, I should really have thought scarcely worth confutation. We, it seems—a wise, prudent, reflecting people—are much struck with all the outrages that France has committed upon the Continent ; but on the powers of the Continent itself, no lasting impression has been made. Is this probable ? Is it possible ? Is it in the nature of things, that the *contemplation* of the wrongs and miseries which others have endured, should have worked a deeper impression upon our minds, than the *suffering* of those miseries and wrongs has left on the minds of those upon whom they were actually inflicted ?

“ Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures

“ Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.”——

Yet the echo and report of the blows by which other countries have fallen, are supposed to have had more effect upon us, than the blows themselves produced upon the miserable victims who sunk beneath them.

The pillage and bloody devastation of Italy strike *us* with horror;—but Italy, we are to believe, is contented with what has befallen her. The insults which are hurled by the French garrison from the walls of the citadel of Turin rouse resentment in *our* breasts; but have no effect on the feelings of the Piedmontese. *We* read with indignation of the flag of Bernadotte displayed in mockery and insult to the Emperor and his subjects; but it flaunted in the eyes of the people of Vienna without exciting any emotions of hatred or resentment. The invasion of a province of a friendly power with whom they had no cause nor pretext for hostility, has created in *us* a decided detestation for the unprincipled hypocrisy and ambition of the Directory; but the Ottoman Porte sits down contented with the loss of Egypt; feels no injury, and desires neither reparation nor revenge.

And then, Sir, the wrongs of Switzerland! They, too, are calculated to excite an interest *here*; but the Swiss no doubt endure them with quiet resignation, and contented humility. If, after the taking of Soleure, the venerable Magistrates of that place were first paraded round the town in barbarous triumph, and afterwards, contrary to all the laws of war, of nations, and of nature, were inhumanly put to death; if, when the unoffending town of Sion capitulated to the French, the troops were let loose to revel in every species of licentiousness and cruelty,—if the women, after having been brutally violated, were thrown alive into the flames; if, more recently, when Stantz was carried after a short but vigorous and honourable resistance, such as would have conciliated the esteem of any but a French conqueror, the whole town was burnt to the ground, and the ashes quenched with the blood of the inhabitants:—the bare recital of these horrors and atrocities awakens in British bosoms, I trust it *does* awaken, I trust it will long keep alive, an abhorrence of the nation and name of that people by whom such execrable cruelties have been practised, and such terrible calamities inflicted: but on the Swiss (we are to understand) these cruelties and calamities have left no lasting impression; the inhabitants of Soleure, who followed, with tears of anguish and indignation, their venerated magistrates to a death of terror and ignominy; the hus-

bands and fathers and sons of those wretched victims who expired in torture and in shame, beneath the brutality of a savage soldiery at Sion; the wretched survivors of those who perished in the ruins of their country at Stantz; *they all felt but a transient pang; their tears by this time are dried; their rage is hushed; their resentment silenced: there is nothing in their feelings which can be stimulated into honourable and effectual action; there is no motive for their exertions, upon which we can safely and permanently rely!* Sir, I should be ashamed to waste your time by arguing such a question.

If, however, with such allies as there is a probability of obtaining, with such a chance for the fidelity and stability of those alliances as the circumstances to which I have alluded appear to furnish, we are yet to be told that there is no safety in such a system: it may be worth while to consider very shortly, whether a greater degree of security would belong to a *separate treaty of peace* with France concluded at the present moment, if at the present moment it were possible to conclude it. I certainly have no thoughts of troubling you at length upon this part of the subject, because there is not one word in the honourable gentleman's speech which implies the belief (it would indeed be strange if he could believe) that any peace on any terms is at present within our power. But if the faith of other powers be doubtful, the perfidy of France is certain.

Need I enumerate the several instances of direct and profligate breach of faith which have distinguished, or rather which have marked in almost equal degree, every diplomatic act of the French Republic? Need I recall to your memory how the preliminaries of Leoben (first granted to the Emperor to extricate Buonaparte from the difficulties of the situation into which his rashness had precipitated him), were withdrawn and cancelled by the French Government, under the pretence that to claim the execution of them was to impose on the generosity of the Republic? How in their room was substituted the treaty of Campo Formio? And how the treaty of Campo Formio, after being violated in innumerable instances, has been almost distinctly abrogated and renounced in the confederacies at Radstadt? Need I desire you to recollect the fraud and violence by which the French took possession of Menice, and the shameless injustice with which they the next day transferred that possession to the Emperor? Need I return again to Switzerland to remind you, that the invasion of that devoted country was the work not of arms so much as of guile; that the way for pillage and devastation was opened by the pretext of superintending and

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guaranteeing a few *Parliamentary Reforms*? Can we remember these things, and yet pretend to doubt if we shall have as good security for the fidelity of our allies in the prosecution of the contest, as we could build on the faith of France for its safe and honourable termination?

There is yet another point of view in which this argument may be considered. Let us compare the expectations which we may be allowed to form of *our* allies, with the character and situation of the several allies of France. If we, in renewing the great confederacy of the powers of the Continent, are weaving a rope of sand;—let us examine whether the connections of France are bound to her by a chain which nothing can loosen. If the ground upon which we stand is false and hollow, let us see whether the alliances of France rest upon a more stable and solid foundation.

If the only sure foundation of permanent alliance between nations must be laid in community of interest and of sentiment, in the sense of mutual benefits, or in the interchange of protection on the one side, and attachment on the other:—let us look round, Sir, among the States which are immediately connected with France; let us examine the benefits which they derive from her friendship, and it will not be difficult to estimate the affection which they must owe to her in return.

Is it in the Cisalpine, the Roman, the Ligurian Republics, those deformed and rickety children, upon whom the Mother Republic has lavished so much of her care,—is it in these, however they may bear the precious resemblance of their parent, that we are to look for the fondness of filial duty and attachment?

Are we look for it in the Cisalpine Republic, whom, in preference to the others, she appears to have selected as a living subject for her experiments in political anatomy; whom she has delivered up tied and bound to a series of butchering, bungling, philosophical professors, to distort and mangle, and lop, and stretch its limbs into all sorts of fantastical shapes, and to hunt through its palpitating frame the vital principle of republicanism?

Is the infant Roman Republic so gratified by the present which France has made to it of five Consuls instead of two; as to forget all the miseries, the robbery, the confiscation, and the blood, by which this invaluable acquisition has been purchased?

Does the protection which she has afforded to the Ligurian Republic, entitle her to their affectionate acknowledgement and pious devotion? Observe, I beg of you, in what a situation those unfortunate Ligurians have been placed by her. They are forced into acts of outrage and hostility against England. We declare war

against them ;—and such is their confidence in the protection of France, that no sooner has that war been declared, than they come crawling upon their knees to implore our pity and forbearance ! Unnatural Ligurians ! if they are not thankful for such an instance of the parental solicitude of France for their welfare !

Look next at that unfortunate Prince, whose dominions border upon these wretched Republics ; and ask, by what ties of gratitude is the King of Sardinia bound to his ally ! The King of Sardinia, it is true, has not yet been precipitated from his throne : but he sits there with the sword of a French garrison suspended above his head. He retains, indeed, the style and title of King ; but there is a French General to be Viceroy over him. A prisoner in his own capital, surrounded by the spies and agents, and hemmed in by the arms of the Directory, compelled to dismiss from his Councils and his presence all those of his servants who were most attached to his person, and most zealous for his interests ; compelled to preach daily to his people, the mortifying and degrading lesson of that patience and humility, of which he is himself a melancholy example, to excuse and extenuate the insults offered by his allies to his subjects, to repress, even by force, the resentment of his subjects against his allies : is this a situation in which the King of Sardinia can be supposed to derive comfort from the alliance of France, and repay it with thankfulness ? Would he not, even if this were to be the extent of his suffering and degradation ; would he not, if he inherits the spirit of his great ancestors, if their blood flows in his veins ; would he not seize, even at the risk of his crown and of his life, any opportunity that might be afforded him, to emancipate himself from a connection so burdensome, to shake off the weight of a friendship so intolerable ?

But he well knows that he has not yet suffered all that is prepared for him. He knows full well that he is allowed to occupy even this shadowy and tottering throne, to grasp the “ unreal mockery” of a sceptre, only so long as he shall be necessary as Purveyor for the French army in Italy ; or until it shall please the capricious cruelty of his tyrants to end his disgrace by annihilation. Perhaps the supplies for a campaign may be more readily procured by the operations of a regular government, than they could be by any new upstart revolutionary power, in a country agitated by the ferment of political change. Perhaps the lust of destroying may overbear this prudential consideration. But, at all events, the war in Italy once over, whether it be in the tide of victory, or in the ebb and reflux of defeat, that the French armies return through Piedmont, their passage will alike be fatal to this unhappy Monarch

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and to his people ; they will equally sweep away with them, in a torrent, whatever remains of royalty and of established government ; and will leave behind them the same wreck, the same shapeless ruins, with which the fair face of the neighbouring countries is already encumbered and deformed.

But, perhaps, with more powerful and more respected allies, with those whose names were brought forward with such display and ostentation in the negotiation at Lisle, as inseparably connected with the honour and interests of the French Republic ; perhaps with Holland and with Spain a greater degree of forbearance has been observed ; a more friendly and liberal intercourse has been established ; a more honourable and independent system of communication has been maintained.

The friendship of Holland ! the independence of Spain ! Is there a man so besotted as to suppose, that there is one hour of peace with France preserved by either of these unhappy countries, that there is one syllable of friendship uttered by them towards France ; but what is extorted by the immediate pressure, or by the dread and terror of French arms ?——

—— “ mouth-honour, breath

“ Which the poor heart would fain refuse, but dare not !”

Have the regenerated Republic of Holland, or the degraded Monarchy of Spain, such reason to rejoice in the protection of the French Republic, that they would voluntarily throw themselves between her and any blow which might menace her existence ?

Holland once had wealth, had industry, had commerce. Where are they now ? Gone ; swallowed up in the all-devouring gulph of French bankruptcy. Holland once had flourishing colonies ; them, perhaps, France has preserved for her. The flag of the enemies of France is flying in Ceylon, and at the Cape of Good Hope. Holland had once a navy, a navy of strength and gallantry and reputation, a navy which has often contended even with our own, and contended with no mean exertion, for the mastery of the sea ? Where is it now ? Where is the skill which directed, the promptness, courage, and vigour, which manned it ? All utterly destroyed and gone. The baneful touch of French fraternity has blasted the reputation, has unmanned the strength, has bowed the spirit, of the people, in the same proportion as it has exhausted the resources of the country. The spirit of the people is bowed, it is true ; but let us trust that it is not broken ; let us hope that, if an opening should be presented, it may yet spring up with sudden

and irresistible violence, to the astonishment and overthrow of its oppressors!

Spain, however, it may be said, is still powerful, and still a Monarchy; to Spain, therefore, the friendship of France must have been offered on more equal and durable terms. An alliance with a Bourbon cemented with Bourbon blood cannot but be lasting. I look at Spain, Sir, and it must be owned I find her still a Monarchy: she has not yet received the blessings of a Directory and two Councils. But, I confess, I perceive no one of those features by which the Monarchy of Spain has heretofore been distinguished. I see nothing of power; I can discover nothing of policy. I know, that to be engaged in an impolitic war, is not of itself an unheard-of, or an unaccountable novelty. Spain has, no doubt, been often engaged, as well as other powers, in wars of pride, in wars of ambition, in wars of doubtful or mistaken interest. In an absolute Monarchy too, like Spain, it must often have happened, that, in matters of war, or alliance, as well as of internal regulation and domestic policy, the will of the Prince, guided either by shallow favouritism, or by crooked intrigue, has, at times, adopted measures prejudicial to the welfare of his subjects. A powerful and haughty nobility, a numerous and highly-privileged clergy, may at other times have given an impulse to the direction of affairs agreeable only to their own prejudices and partial interests. At other times, again, the tempest of popular fury has overborne both the will of the Prince and the power of the Aristocracy, and driven the machine of Government wholly out of its natural course and direction. But a situation of things, in which the Crown is enthralled, the aristocracy humbled, and the nation in general degraded and impoverished, not by the effects of internal struggle, or the perverse preponderance of any one party or member of the State, but by the palpable, undisguised, and oppressive agency of a foreign power: this is, indeed, an unusual situation for an independent kingdom. Such is, however, the situation of Spain. The power of the Monarch, the prejudices and privileges of the higher orders, the comfort, happiness, and almost subsistence of the mass of the people, are all embarked together in a war, of which the success or the failure must be equally fatal to them all: a war, which has committed that country with an enemy whom it dares not face, and has linked it to the fortunes, and subjected it to the will of an ally, whose friendship is more formidable than hostility: a war which has brought into contempt the authority of the government, and the character of the nation; which has exhausted their commercial and annihilated their military marine: which, in precluding their inter-

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course with their colonies, has cut off the springs of wealth that fed the state, and the streams of commerce that enriched the country : a war, which has done more in two short years, under the auspices of France, to carry into execution that vote of the British Parliament in 1707, to wrest the Monarchy of Spain and the Spanish West Indies from the possession of the House of Bourbon, than all the exertions of this country could ever have effected, and than all its enmity could ever have desired.

So fatal has been to Spain already the friendship of the French Republic ; and such are the obligations by which she is bound to it in perpetual allegiance and fidelity ! But this is not yet all : the King of Spain has yet to drink the bitter dregs of misery and degradation.

Sir, when Louis XIV. broke up the conferences of Gertruydenberg rather than submit to the proposal of turning his arms against his Grandson ; whatever our dislike of his former insolence, or our detestation of his ambition may be, we cannot refuse our approbation to this just display of spirit and of feeling. Fallen as he then was from the splendour of his high fortunes, and in some measure at the mercy of his enemies ; we cannot but applaud the honourable pride with which, while conceding territory and dominion as the price of peace, he yet rejected peace itself, when it was to be purchased with ignominy. I think too, we cannot but condemn the cruel and ungenerous policy which dictated the demand of such a sacrifice. But this, we are to recollect, was the demand of a triumphant enemy. Mark now the extortion of a protecting friend ! The King of Spain, exhausted in his resources, and disgraced in his arms, by a war carried on at the instigation and for the exclusive interest of the French Directory, is, in return for these exertions, commanded by that Directory to employ what remains of the strength and power of his kingdom, for the conquest of Portugal, for the subversion of the throne to which his daughter is heir. Have we the feelings of men, and do we doubt what sentiments of indignation and disgust this outrageous command must have excited in the bosom of a Father and a King ?

Now, Sir, there is a story, and it was a good one till the French got hold of it—the story of *William Tell*. I think I need hardly make the application. Would it appear to us a surprising or an unnatural thing, if the King of Spain, urged and finally compelled to point his last weapon at the Crown of his Daughter, should turn round in the fury of despair, and aim it at the bosom of the tyrant who dictated the blow ?

I have not troubled the House with this enumeration, as con-
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ceiving it to hold out in itself inducements and temptations for the continuance of the war; supposing that we had any choice as to continuing or concluding it. But forced as we are to persevere in the contest, and expedient as it appears, that we should furnish ourselves with whatever means we can procure for conducting it to a termination consistent with our safety and our honour, and convinced, as I think every man must be, that the co-operation of other powers affords at least one great instrument for such an exertion; it does, I think, seem material, when against the system of alliances no argument is so loudly urged as the probability of those alliances proving unfaithful and unsound; it does, I think, seem material to ascertain, whether this hazard is peculiar to *our* situation alone; or whether, if on the one hand we have but feeble assistance, we are likely, on the other hand, to have any thing but feebleness to oppose. Committed with our enemy single handed, France to England, what should we fear? But if the accession of allies is to us an accession of weakness, is it not something to be assured that to France it is not an accession of permanent and formidable strength? that if France has the means of seducing *our* allies, we have the satisfaction of feeling that *our* interest cannot be indifferent to the *allies of France*? that even when men called on her side and fighting under her banners, they cannot fail in their secret hearts to pray that the victory may be on our side?

Is not this the case? Do we not know it to be so? Who is there, that has not heard, and heard with heartfelt delight, that the glorious victory of the first of August communicated a sensation of triumph and of joy, not only to the heart of England; not only to the bosom of those nations whose deliverance is more immediately effected; not only to nations, neutral in name, but who feel in spite of their neutrality that their independent existence is involved in the issue of the contest, but even to nations nominally hostile to Great Britain, to Governments the slaves of the power or creatures of the caprice of France? The presence of a French Ambassador could scarce repress the burst of exultation in Courts that trembled at his frown. The whispered satisfaction went round in circles where an open manifestation of joy would have been treason. And even the vassal Republics leaped in their chains.

Oh! but however willing the allies of France might be to seize a favourable opportunity for shaking off the yoke of her protection, were we even able to rally them on our side in the outset of the contest, their assistance would be nothing worth. Exhausted and dispirited as they are, they have neither the heart nor strength to fight the battle of independence! True, Sir, they have been cruelly reduced

and broken down. It is true, that many of them have been moulded and distorted into shapes so strange and unnatural, that they scarce have limbs to use, or the power of self-motion remaining ; but yet, even so, they are not wholly without vigour and vitality,——

“ Spoliatis arma supersunt.”

The arms which they have remaining are the arms most terrible to tyrants, their wrongs, their desperation, the desire of revenge. Let France appeal to the bad passions of *our allies* ; let her cajole their fears, or inflame their appetite for aggrandizement. The foundations of *our* tacit but intimate alliance with the *allies of France* are already laid, in their just resentment, in their proud indignation, in every virtuous and every honourable feeling. When did such a contest terminate in giving ultimate and permanent preponderance to evil ? If I do not venture to anticipate a fortunate result amounting to the full completion of our sanguine and justifiable expectations, I may surely ask, what has France done, to deserve that the ordinary course of human events should be reversed in her favour ?

But then, Sir, another and a graver doubt is stated. It is doubted whether, with half the world in arms on our side, the objects which we might hope to obtain would be, in any just and politic sense, *British objects*. I, Sir, have not sat long enough in this House to remember the time, but a time I am told there was, when if I had ventured to hesitate a doubt whether or not the situation of the powers of the Continent, relatively to us or to each other, and the general balance of Europe, (as it is called) were objects of British concern, I should have been scouted and laughed at as a driveller and an idiot, or reviled as a presumptuous arraigner of the wisdom and policy of our ancestors. I understand that all this is now changed. I understand that the great authorities, from whom I should more particularly have expected such a censure if I had ventured such an opinion, have entirely thrown away and abandoned their favourite system ; and are now more strenuous in decrying those who maintain it, than they were before in propagating it themselves. I cannot account for these excentricities ; but I do not presume to blame them. They at least teach me to proceed with caution ; and rather to inquire with great humility from the honourable gentleman on the other side of the House, whether or no such and such things *are* objects of interest to our country ? than to state any affirmative opinion of my own upon the subject.

The honourable gentleman mentioned the East Indies, and alluded to the expedition to Egypt as having threatened our possessions in that quarter. Is then the deliverance of Egypt from a

French army a *British object*? Does the honourable gentleman, or does any man, believe, that if peace had been concluded at Lisle, this expedition would at all the less have been undertaken? Does he believe that, in that case, to defeat the expedition would have been equally a *British object*? And does he think that, after the peace made at Lisle, we should have been equally in a condition to defeat it? Would not the co-operation of the Turk have been then desirable, to enable us to effect this purpose? Is it less desirable now? If, by his co-operation, we are enabled to confound and expel that horde of robbers, and buccaneers, who have taken possession of his Egyptian territory, or, (what I should like much better,) to shut them up on all sides, and leave them there to be quietly and gradually exterminated—is *this* no advantage to Great Britain? Was the purpose of the honourable gentleman's motion to preclude the possibility of *this* event?

If, by the joint assistance of Russia and the Porte, we could sweep the Levant and the Mediterranean of the scattered remnants of this piratical armament; if the coasts of Italy were thus rendered unaffailable by the enemy, and the southern coasts of France thus laid open to our attack, and the ports and commerce of the Mediterranean and Levant secured to us; are *these British objects*?

Are the Netherlands a *British object*? I have heard that the dependence of the Netherlands on France, has in former times been considered as so prejudicial to this country, that there was no case in which that object alone would not have been a sufficient cause for prolonging or for even engaging in a war. I do not assert that this is so. But if there be any truth in this opinion, and if, by a vigorous co-operation on the part of Austria or Prussia, or both, we might have a chance of wresting this possession from France,—will the honourable gentleman, will any other man in the House, be the person to get up and say, 'This you might effect, but I will prevent you?'

If, by the help of Prussia, we might hope to rescue Holland from her present state of servitude and degradation, to raise her head once more among the independent powers of Europe, a rich, a flourishing, and a happy country, connected with us by old habits, common interest, and the reciprocation of Commercial advantages; will any man say that this would not be a *British object*? will any man lay in his claim now, would any man be proud hereafter to have entitled himself, to the credit of having thrown an insuperable impediment in the way of the rescue and restoration of Holland?

And yet, Sir, Holland has heretofore been thought to be so intimately interesting to this country, especially by gentlemen who used

to sit on that side of the House, and to whose former opinions on foreign politics I have been accustomed to attach no small degree of respect and consideration, that, if I am rightly informed, (for it is much beyond my memory in Parliament) the only act of my right honourable friend's Administration which has had the good fortune to receive the approbation and applause of those gentlemen, and upon which they lavished as large and unqualified praise as his warmest supporters could have afforded him, was the spirited and judicious exertion by which, in the year 1787, the designs of France in Holland were defeated (at the risk of a war) and the ascendancy of this country secured.

I cannot believe that if we were now debating, if it possibly could be fit matter for this House to debate, 'Whether or no, having an opportunity to conclude a peace in all other respects desirable, we should continue the war for the single purpose of the 'deliverance of Holland alone,' I cannot believe that those persons to whom I have referred, holding the principles which they have heretofore professed, could hesitate to give their vote in the affirmative.

If I am wrong in this supposition, I desire only to be informed, where, and when, and how, the change in the policy of the country took place? Is the ambition of France less formidable now? Is her desire of aggrandizement less notorious? Is her power less terrible? Is her hostility to this country less acrimonious! than when, in the year 1786, the commercial treaty with France was arraigned, by the same persons whose maxims of foreign policy I have already quoted, not as unfavourable to Great Britain, but as likely to take off the edge of our national antipathy against France? When my right honourable friend was attacked and reviled for having, in a paltry search after mercantile profit, wholly abandoned the doctrines of our ancestors, and improvidently thrown away the safety of posterity, by admitting the possibility of any relations between this country and France, except those of jealous rivalry or open contest; for having attempted to lull England into the belief that the ambition of France, because not active at the moment, was extinguished; that her power, because not exerted, had ceased to be formidable: that her professions of friendship could mean any thing, but to gain time and strength; that her apparent pacific disposition could be any thing but a drawing of breath against the renewal of hostilities?

If all this is changed, allow me to inquire of those who can instruct me, by what process the change has been wrought? and at what period? What is its origin and date? Did it come in with the

new style? Was it on *primidi*, *duodi*, or *decadi*, in what month, and in what year, of the new Republican Calendar? Did the old system expire in September, and the new one begin with *Fructidor*? I really ask for information. I do not mean to question the propriety of the alteration, but to get at the reason of it. I am not too old to learn. But I cannot take it upon authority alone: and that too, an authority which has always hitherto been on the other side. I must continue to repeat my old catechism, until I am sufficiently illuminated to understand the articles of the new.

Till then, I must continue to ask with some degree of earnestness, If any one of the objects, which I have enumerated, may possibly be obtained by an alliance with the powers of the Continent, much more if we could be sanguine enough to suppose that such an opening might arise, as would lead to the attainment of them *all*, as would lead to the reduction of France within her antient limits, and to the replacing Europe nearly in the situation in which it stood before the commencement of the war; whether or no it is possible for a Member of the British Parliament to entertain so extraordinary and perverse an ambition as to be desirous of having it to say hereafter, 'All this might perhaps have been accomplished, but by a single motion I prevented it all?'

Understand me, Sir, however, that I do not mean to undertake that if the honourable gentleman's motion should *not* pass, all this *will* therefore be accomplished. We are debating now, not whether or no such and such exertions will lead to such and such results; but whether or no we shall gratuitously throw away the only chance which we have for the exertions being made. The honourable gentleman does not affirm, that Europe cannot be saved; he only desires that *we* may have no share, that we may give no encouragement for saving it. In answer to such a proposition, it is not necessary for me to argue (what is not denied) that the success of the experiment is probable; it is only necessary for me to ask, Whether its success is so improbable, and its nature so uninteresting, that you will determine beforehand that it ought not to be tried?

The honourable gentleman, however, for his part, declares, that he "washes his hands of the whole business." The honourable gentleman has a habit, Sir, (which I do not mention, to disapprove it) of appealing to the testimony of his conscience, and of holding out to this opponents the miseries which must accrue from "pillows stuffed with thorns." Has the honourable gentleman ever considered the present situation of Switzerland, in this point of view? And is he so eager to "wash his hands" of any share in her possible emancipation? Is it necessary as a balm to his conscience?

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Will it strew his pillow with roses, to be able to say to himself :
 ' If the people of Switzerland succeed in breaking the galling fetters
 ' of an intolerable and bloody tyranny, thank God, *I* have given no
 ' aid to their efforts. *I* can lay my hand upon my heart and de-
 ' clare, that for ought *I* would have done for them, or would have
 ' encouraged them to do for themselves, the Swifs should have con-
 ' tinued to groan in bitterness of sorrow, in abasement and despair.
 ' Fight your own battles, miserable Swifs!—England has no sym-
 ' pathy with your sufferings!—Bind tighter their fetters, sangui-
 ' nary Directory—You have nothing to dread from English in-
 terference!

“ Bleed, bleed, poor Country !

“ Great Tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,

“ For Goodness dares not check thee !”

Such, Sir, is the language of the honourable gentleman's motion. But such, I trust, is not the sense of those who have heard it. I too will appeal to the conscientious feelings of individuals. I might appeal to their recorded professions in the almost unanimous vote upon the address to His Majesty at the beginning of the session ; but I confess when I can reach the heart and spirit, I prefer a direct appeal to them, to any argument that rests on mere formal ties or technical obligations. I might remind every gentleman who hears me, that he has concurred in an address to the Throne, expressing his hearty hope that the opening afforded by the glorious successes of His Majesty's arms may lead to “ *the general deliverance of Europe* ;” and pledging himself, in no equivocal manner, to assist with his voice and council in the prosecution of this important object. I might require them to reconcile, if they can, the pledge there taken with a motion which contradicts both its letter and its meaning. But I prefer going home with every man to his own bosom, and desiring him to remember, what were his first individual impressions upon receiving the account of Lord Nelson's stupendous achievement ? What was the language of every society in which he happened to be conversant ? The first sentiment undoubtedly was that of thanks and praise to the heroes who had thus exalted the name, the power, and the glory, of their country, and of humble gratitude to that providence which had so signally prospered their exertions. But next—what occurred to every man's feelings and understanding ? what was the question which immediately succeeded to the first burst of wonder, the first transport of thankfulness, the first emotions of rapture and delight ? I see I am anticipated, “ *What effect will this have upon the powers of the Continent ?*”

This was the question asked and echoed by a thousand tongues. What then was the meaning of this question? Was it the offspring of cold speculation? of idle curiosity? No. It sprung from the instantaneous, and almost instinctive, conviction, that, in spite of all the sophisticated argument that may be urged to dissuade us from a generous sympathy with the fates and fortunes of other nations, we *have* an interest in the liberties of the Continent; that *our* assurance is doubly sure when those around us are preserved from destruction; that *we* can be but precariously safe, so long as there is no safety for *the rest of Europe*.

Depend upon it, Sir, in all questions which partake equally of reason and of feeling, the first impressions of a good heart and sound mind are rarely to be distrusted. They may be sanguine; they may be romantic; they may represent the object desired as much nearer, than in the practical pursuit it turns out to be; but, as to the object itself, they are seldom misdirected. And I believe that any man of honest and liberal feelings, who can recollect what were his first impressions upon any subject, in the consideration of which the heart as well as the understanding was engaged, will find that, in consulting those impressions, he has not been led astray.

How stands the case in the present instance? Have we any reason to repent or to be ashamed of the wishes that sprung up in our bosoms upon this occasion? Was the impulse too generous, and must it be restrained? Was the benevolence too large, and must it be contracted? What new circumstances have arisen to vary our original view of the subject? Has England become less powerful to interfere? Has the slavery of the Continent been lightened? or the tyranny of France softened or subdued?

Or has some disposition for peace been manifested by the enemy? such as throws difficulty in the way of any hostile and offensive operations against them; and requires that we should rest on our arms until their intentions shall be more clearly explained? I have heard of nothing of this sort—Has the honourable gentleman? He has mentioned nothing of it. He has not pretended that *France* is willing to negotiate. He has not advised that *we* should propose a negotiation.

He has indeed given it as his opinion that peace is desirable; and he has drawn some arguments to this effect from Ireland, from the East Indies, and from St. Domingo. I shall not follow him into these arguments; both because I think that they may all of them, with much greater propriety, be reserved for separate discussion in their due time; and because, unless this motion were to be under-

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stood distinctly as a motion for peace, I do not see how they can be made to bear upon the present discussion.

But does the honourable gentleman intend his motion as a motion for peace? Then indeed I should have a worse opinion of it than I had before. For is this the way to go about such a business, with any prospect, or with any serious appearance of a desire, of success? If the honourable gentleman really thinks this a moment for opening a negotiation—why has he not the candour and manliness to say so? Let him bring the matter distinctly to a question; and let us argue it. I have no hesitation in saying that it is my decided opinion that this is *not* the moment. But my opinion is more decided still, that, *if* this *were* the moment, the honourable gentleman has chosen the very worst possible way for availing ourselves of the opening.

Is it dignity, and etiquette, and national honour, that stand in the way of a more direct attempt at negotiation? Is it necessary in the honourable gentleman's judgement that France should make the first overtures? I confess, Sir, I have no such delicacy: and if the moment seemed to me proper for any overtures at all, I should not raise much squabble about who should offer or who should receive them. But if the honourable gentleman has this delicacy, mark, I intreat you, how delicately he manages it. He will not speak *to* France, but he would speak at her. He will not propose—not he—that we should say to the Directory, “Will you make peace?” No, Sir, we are merely to say to ourselves, loud enough for the Directory to overhear us, “I wish these French gentlemen would make an overture to us.” Now, Sir, does *this* save the dignity of the country? or is it only a sneaking, shabby way of doing what, if fit to be done at all, must, to have any serious effect, be done openly, unequivocally, and directly? But I beg the honourable gentleman's pardon: I misrepresent him; I certainly do. His motion does not amount even to so much as I have stated. He begins farther off. The soliloquy which he prompts us by his motion is no more than this—“We must continue to make war against France, to be sure—and we are sorry for it—but we will not do it as if we bore malice. We will not make an ill-natured, hostile kind of war any longer—that we won't. And who knows but, if they should happen to overhear this resolution, as the Directory are good-natured at bottom, their hearts may soften and grow kind towards us—and then they will offer to make a peace!” And thus, Sir, and thus only, is the motion a motion for peace.

But the honourable gentleman reproaches His Majesty's Minis-

ers that they have lost all their pacific dispositions ; that they are become inveterately and incurably warlike ; that the spirit of moderation which he so much commended in the Manifesto of last year is evaporated ; and that however they may have stood out against Lord Duncan's victory, that of Lord Nelson has intoxicated and inflamed them to madness.

That the confidence of the country is indeed high, I am happy to acknowledge ; and that the Government partakes the spirit of the people, I am equally willing to believe. But that this spirit has started suddenly out of the late victory, and is exclusively to be attributed to it, I cannot agree. It was confirmed, indeed, by that victory, a victory which would have created a spirit if it had not found one. But that the spirit existed before the event of the first of August, is no derogation to the glory of that day, and is a proud accession of dignity to the character of the country. It adds new lustre to the character of the country, it places in a more conspicuous light the talents and reputation of Lord Nelson, that before we were in possession of the confidence which grew out of his victory, we had the confidence to presume it.

Let us recollect only the days and months of anxiety which we passed, before the intelligence of that memorable event had reached us. It was an anxiety, not of apprehension, but of impatience. Our prayers were put up, not for success, but, for an opportunity of deserving it : we asked, not that Nelson might conquer Buonaparte, but, that Buonaparte might not have the triumph of deceiving and escaping him ; not that we might gain the battle, but, that we might find the enemy : For the rest we had nothing to fear. —

“ Concurrant pariter cum ratibus rates ;

“ Spectent Numina Ponti, et

“ Palmam, qui meruit, ferat !”

Standing, then, in our present proud and exalted situation, fortified by that confidence which has its foundation in the good sense, the spirit, the unexampled prosperity of the nation, and which, by the blessing of Providence, the signal and glorious successes of our arms have established and confirmed, what is the best advantage that can be made of such a situation ? ‘ Hoard up your safety for your own use,’ says the motion of the honourable gentleman. ‘ Lend a portion of it to other nations, that it may be returned to you tenfold, in the preservation and security of the world,’ — is the dictate of a larger, and, I think, a sounder policy.

But the nations of the Continent, the honourable gentleman will tell us, stood by, while we were engaged in a struggle in which our

very existence was at stake, without offering any assistance, or manifesting any interest in our preservation: undoubtedly, so they did; and, undoubtedly, as the honourable gentleman insinuates, our revenge is now in our power. We may tell those, who abandoned us at that moment of peril, that it is now our turn to take breath, while they are contending; that to us is now the respite, and to them the toil; that as they left us contentedly to our fate, we consign them un pityingly to theirs. We may do this in strict retaliation: but I think a British House of Commons will feel that we have a nobler vengeance in our power. We have it in our power to say to the nations of Europe: "You deserted us at our utmost need; but the first use that we make of our prosperity is to invite you to partake of it. We disdained to call you in, reluctant as you appeared, to share our danger; but, we are now by our own exertions secure; come now, and take shelter under our security."

Sir, they were wise words that were spoken by a great statesman and orator of ancient times, under circumstances not wholly unlike the present circumstances of the world. "If by any super-human testimony, for to such a paradox no testimony merely human could possibly obtain belief, if by an Angel from Heaven I were to be assured, that the farther the enemy pushed his conquests over other countries, the more territory he acquired—the more Governments he subverted—the more nations he subdued,—by so much the more quiet, the more harmless, the more friendly neighbour he would be to this country: I protest that I would not, even with this view, and under these conditions, consent to give my vote for the slavery of Europe. But if there be no man upon earth who will venture to assert so monstrous a proposition; if the very reverse of all this be demonstrably true; if every step that the enemy takes upon the Continent is a step to the accomplishment of our destruction, if every city that he ransacks, every district that he acquires, is a fund of wealth, and a levy of soldiers, to be employed hereafter in an exterminating war against us: then, in God's name, to what do we look? or wherefore are we hesitating?"

Since then, Sir, this motion appears to me to be founded on no principle of policy or necessity; since, if it be intended for a censure on Ministers,—it is unjust; if for a control,—it is nugatory; as its tendency is to impair the power of prosecuting war with vigour, and to diminish the chance of negotiating peace with dignity, or concluding it with safety; as it contradicts without reason, and without advantage, the established policy of our ancestors; as it must degrade in the eyes of the world the character of this country; as it

must carry dismay and terror throughout Europe ; and, above all, as it must administer consolation, and hope, and power, and confidence to France ; I shall give it my most hearty and decided negative.

Mr. JEKYL said :—I expected, Sir, that the motion which has been this night proposed by my honourable friend in so plain, but in so able a manner, would have been attended with at least this advantage, that it would have procured to the House the satisfaction of knowing the precise object of the war. My honourable friend over the way, (if he will permit me to call him by that name), however did not in the course of his speech afford us any certain ground of judgement upon this point. From some parts of his argument we should have been led to imagine that we were now to wage a war of vengeance against the atrocities which the French have committed ; sometimes it was to be for the deliverance of Europe ; but after all, we are still left in the dark whether it has any definite object at all. The subject was indeed handled by my honourable friend opposite to me in a speech of no less ability than of preparation, and to the talent which it displayed I am ready to pay a just tribute of applause ; but I must take the liberty to animadvert upon some of the arguments which he employed. My honourable friend alluded to the apathy with which the motion has been received by this side of the House on the present occasion. Where he discovered this apathy I am sure I cannot tell. It is true, indeed, that our organ is rather thin ; we are but few performers, and we are not very confident in the support of our audience. We have not indeed the well-disciplined phalanx by which the honourable gentleman is supported. In the present military disposition of the country, it is no wonder that the gentlemen opposite should be correct in their evolutions, and that they should be so trained that the whole of the front ranks should move together. As to the principle of a defensive war, upon which the honourable gentleman was so facetious, and the sentiments of an eminent Statesman, I shall perhaps say a few words by and by. The honourable gentleman thought proper to state that my honourable friend, in making his motion, had no reference to peace. On the contrary, the motion had so far peace in its contemplation as it was the direct purpose of it ; to avoid all engagements which could tend to impede a peace on secure and honourable terms. The honourable gentleman alluded to the victory of the Nile—a subject upon which every Englishman must have but one opinion. He asks, what was the sensation which this glorious achievement produced ? I will tell the honourable gentleman then, that the sensation of joy which it occasioned was combined with the hope that it might tend to the resto-

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ration of peace between this country and France. Now, however, it is thrown out that not peace but war was the great consequence to which it led, and we are called upon to rejoice, not in its pacific effects, but in its tendency to give new vigour and extension to schemes of warfare and coalition. If the moment in which we stand on the proud eminence of such a triumph be not the moment to think of peace, in what state of our affairs can we turn our thoughts to this great object with propriety? I do not speak of offering terms of peace in the way of soliloquy, which the honourable gentleman ridicules; I would not recommend any such compromise, because the occasion does not require so shallow a device. I see no ill consequence that could result from making offers of peace frankly and directly. This country, however, is again to be embarked upon the ocean of continental politics; we are again to enter the lists without knowing the purposes for which we are engaged, or the extent to which we may be involved. The honourable gentleman thinks that no man can sleep with roses on his pillow, unless he can say that he has taken a share in rescuing Switzerland from the tyranny of France. What, then, are we to engage in a continental war to revenge the wrongs of the Swiss, and to punish the perfidies of France? What does the honourable gentleman say of the practicability of the attempt, and how will he reconcile his warm and generous feeling for the unfortunate with any practical policy, or justify it by a reasonable chance of success? He tells us too, that the allies of France are hollow, that they are ready to desert her. This argument, however, perhaps will be found, if it proves any thing, to prove too much. Spain is dissatisfied with her haughty ally—Holland is weary of her oppressor! What, however, has been our own fortune with our allies? Have we misused our allies, have we oppressed, plundered or insulted them? They too have left us. We find that allies who have been treated with generosity, are as little to be relied upon as those who are the victims of injustice. On a subject like this, perhaps, the honourable gentleman might have directed us to a safer guide than even his own powerful reasoning. Experience has distinctly and recently taught us what we have to expect: Prussia, after receiving one million two hundred thousand pounds of our money, deserted us;—the Emperor, after so many loans and advances, likewise abandoned the common cause;—the King of Sardinia, after receiving two hundred thousand pound for several years, withdrew from the contest. After these proofs of the temper of our allies, had we any reason, as Statesmen, to place any more dependance on their fidelity to a new coalition? Shall we desert our experience, and cherish the hope

that new sentiments will actuate so many powers by whom we have already been deceived? The honourable gentleman says, however, that the faith of treaties with France is not to be trusted. If there be any thing in such an objection, it must be an objection to all peace; it reduces us again to the *bellum internecinum*. He says that although the negociation of Paris or Lisle had concluded in a treaty, the expedition to Egypt would nevertheless have taken place. On this principle then we are never to make peace because treaties may be broken. On this principle the wars which have been waged between this country and France must have been eternal, because certainly we could not be sure that treaties would not be violated. Thus we are again brought back to the war of extermination, which I thought had now been exploded on both sides of the House. But it seems, as the phrase is, we are to rouse Austria and Prussia to second the magnanimity of Russia, and the vigour of the Porte on this occasion. Is there any man, however, who understands even the grammar of politics, that can look for any thing of efficient co-operation towards any great object of general concernment to Europe? Who does not know the schemes of aggrandizement which Russia meditates at the expence of Turkey? Who did not apprehend that when a Russian fleet was allowed to pass the Dardanelles, the Ottomans had, as it were, consented to their own destruction? Of the Ottoman Porte, I am sure, I wish to say nothing offensive, and I am sure my honourable friend behind me, in alluding to it, spoke of the Turks with as much gravity as any man could display on such a subject. I was indeed surprised to observe the tone of ridicule which, in allusion to the Turks, pervaded the honourable gentleman's speech. He alone considered the Turkish aid as matter for merriment. He told us of their gowns and beards, and their smoking their pipes, and in his defence exposed them to a ridicule with which they had not been assailed. Indeed, if I may employ a vulgar expression, he seemed to be in a humour to *quiz* the Turks. Surely the embassy of a noble person, who is said to be going to Constantinople, is not intended to quiz the Grand Seignior. We have heard of conversations between Buonaparte and the Imans and Mustis of Egypt in the Pyramids, but surely we are not to expect that the noble person to whom I have alluded is to perform any farce of a similar nature, or to quiz the gowns, turbans, beards, and tobacco pipes of the Mussulmen; circumstances which must have struck the honourable gentleman as very likely to produce division. But seriously, what kind of vigour do we expect to be displayed by the Ottoman Porte in this new scheme of coalition? Does not every body know, that however grave and respectable personages

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the Turks, nay individuals, be in spite of their gowns and beards, as a nation the Turks are the most inert, the most ignorant, the most sluggish people on the face of God's earth? Have we not proofs before our eyes of their debility and impotence? Do we not see that they have been baffled and defeated by one of their own Rebel Pachas? How then can men of common observation and understanding talk to us of the importance of the Turkish co-operation for any efficient attack upon the power of France? They may make a shew, with a dashing manifesto, drawn up in the stile and spirit of more lettered Cabinets and Statesmen; they may be mighty civil with their presents of Pellices and Aigrettes, and perfectly respectable in spite of their gowns and beards, but as important and efficient allies how can they be considered? What part can they perform in the great schemes which are to be attempted for the deliverance of Europe?

In the course of his speech my honourable friend who proposed this motion suggested that the plans for the deliverance of Europe and foreign alliance, would probably be accompanied with a subsidy. The honourable gentleman in reply, however, said nothing to this point, and I am surprized that he should have omitted a consideration so important to the present question; I hope still that we shall to-night hear something satisfactory on this head. During the former coalition, when this House was called upon to sanction loans and subsidies to Prussia and Austria, we were told that it was impossible for these powers to go on without pecuniary aid from this country. What are we to expect now then, should they be roused into action? Is there a greater chance that they will feel an interest so powerful as to prompt them to contribute to the deliverance of Europe without being stimulated by the wealth of England? I hope we shall know exactly to-night whether we shall be called upon for new subsidies. I am afraid indeed that continental connection is too surely the forerunner of foreign subsidy. This consideration is one of serious and weighty importance. I am not one who is inclined to despondence, nor do I think this a moment in which such a sentiment ought to enter the mind of an Englishman. If, however, our financial situation is not calculated to excite despondence, it ought, as Members of Parliament, to teach us caution. If, however, as there is but too much reason to suspect, these new coalitions will call upon us to remit vast sums to our continental allies, we ought to remember with seriousness the remonstrances and the statements of the Directors of the Bank on this subject at the time the Bank stopped payment. They then demonstrated to the right honourable gentleman the ruinous consequences of such remittances.

If subsidies are to be granted, to send our specie abroad must be the necessary consequence, and to what that might lead it is impossible to say. We have already had the experience of the danger which it occasioned. At present the issues of paper pass current; the public is habituated to it. The clamours and the fears which the stoppage of the Bank produced have again subsided, and all goes smoothly. If, however, a similar event should again occur, it is not easy to say with what mischief it may be attended. Former remedies could not again be applied, and a second panic could not be so easily allayed. Things of this sort, indeed, in the present momentous times, were scarce considered (to use the vulgar saying) a nine-days wonder. Things which formerly would have surprised and alarmed, crowd on us so fast as to diminish our sense of their danger and their consequences. We have seen new schemes of finance; we have seen the land tax sold; we now see the tenth of every man's property about to be put in requisition. The honourable gentleman said a good deal of the reciprocity of argument, which, on certain points, distinguished the gentlemen on this side of the House. In the adoption of schemes which owe their origin to the French Revolution, the right honourable gentleman has displayed this reciprocity in an eminent degree. The financial operations of the French have ever been the theme of declamation to gentlemen on the other side, though they are not unwilling to imitate the principle of what they disapprove. I will venture to assert then, that hardly any measure of Robespierre went beyond the operation of the measure of finance which has lately been proposed. Spies, under the name of Surveyors, are to be employed in the collection of the revenue. Men are to be obliged to make discoveries of their circumstances, or to be taxed by an arbitrary assessment. Such is the situation of our financial resources at a moment when new subsidies will, in all probability, be demanded. I remember a curious saying of a very worthy character, Mr. Serjeant Hill, which is very applicable to this subject. Mr. Serjeant Hill one day observed in conversation, that if he was a Member of this House he would move, that it should be a standing order that a pair of loaded pistols should be laid upon the table, and that if any man rose to move that a guinea should be sent out of the country, it should be the duty of Mr. Ley or Mr. Dyson, directly to shoot him through the head. The right honourable gentleman, however, could find means of sending money to the Emperor without the formality of a proposal, and would be able to avoid the inconvenience to which such a regulation would expose him. No man in the country, I am sure, can feel more than I do the splendour of Lord Nelson's

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victory ; but while this blush of triumph sits upon the face of this country, there is a disease upon its vitals which must excite some alarm. This is the state of our finances. On this subject we have the result of the laborious investigations of a Committee in cart loads of statements which there seems no inclination to discuss. It is a subject, however, to which our attention is immediately directed, when the measures which are to be adopted necessarily lead to subsidies. At the time when the first coalition was put in motion, a famous report appeared in France from *St. Just*, which was much talked of in this House, in which he predicted, as afterwards happened, that the Members of the confederacy, having each a particular interest to pursue, would soon desert the common cause. Is there then any probability that a new coalition will exclude views of particular interests, or that it will be animated with a purer or more persevering prosecution of a general object ? We are told that many of those powers on whom the scourge of French tyranny has fallen are so exhausted, that they have not physical resources left to enable them to throw off the yoke under which they labour. What a prospect does this open to us—what unlimited demand for subsidies and pecuniary aid of every kind from this country ! These deficiencies must be made up by England, and her exhausted resources must be called upon to supply the means of new continental war, and to tempt new coalitions. The honourable gentleman made some allusions to what had been said in another place respecting the insular policy of this country, and I am sure the expressions which he quoted were not in the file by which the eminent Statesman is distinguished. What the honourable gentleman means by a “snug, tight, domestic war” I cannot tell ; but I am sure that the principles laid down by that person for the insular policy of this country, are the true principles of our prosperity. What other gentlemen who are now absent may have said respecting the foreign politics, and foreign interests of this country, I know not. For my own part, I never have been a party man ; I have ever thought that the policy of this country was to avoid continental connections, and our most eminent writers have recommended this policy, as particularly appears from some of their works lately published. Such was the opinion of Bolingbroke, Sir Robert Walpole, Lord Townshend, &c. These men thought that the only high ground on which this country could stand, was to adhere to our insular policy, and to avoid continental connections.

Sir JAMES MURRAY PULTENEY said, that after the very able speech of the honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Can-

ning), he should not detain the House with many remarks. There was one point, however, which, in the great variety of argument which the subject involved, seemed to have escaped him. He alluded to what had been said respecting our successes in the course of the last year. It could not be said that during this period we were quite destitute of allies. It was well known that the situation of the Continent was such as to oblige the French to make great preparations both on the Rhine and in Italy, which might be considered in some measure equal to a campaign. This circumstance must have operated greatly in favour of this country. He was not quite sure if Europe had been perfectly tranquil, and France had seen all the Continent at her feet, if the enemy had kept up a great force on their coasts, and expended the sums they have spent in military preparations by land, upon their marine, perhaps it might have been more difficult and dangerous to detach so large a division of our navy to the Mediterranean, by which the splendid victory of Lord Nelson was achieved. Of that victory no Englishman could be insensible of the value, and it was needless now to insist upon it. No man had felt more anxiously the suspense which we underwent during the cruise of that fleet, or rejoiced more sincerely in the result of the engagement. With respect to the deliverance of Europe, it was an expression to which different meanings might be attached. For his part he understood it not as a philanthropist merely, but as it was connected with our safety, and as it might be considered as a British cause.

Mr. DICKENSON, Jun. said, that though he differed from the honourable gentleman who made the motion respecting the expediency, he by no means imputed to him any improper motives or party views. It was the common practice of those, however, who opposed the war, to dwell upon the expence with which it was attended. This was an objection applicable to all wars that had ever been since the world began. When engaged in war it was necessary that it should be supported. He differed from those who thought that the motion was an encroachment on the King's prerogative. He considered the House of Commons to be a place where they could converse with His Majesty and his Ministers. The motion would be attended with many mischievous consequences, none of the least of which was, that to those abroad who were not acquainted with the nature of our Constitution, it might appear to be a proof of a different interest between the King and the Parliament, and that his Majesty was not free to regulate all matters of peace and war, a supposition perfectly unfounded. It no doubt would tend like-

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wife to damp the spirit of Europe, and to deprive those who struggled under the tyranny of France, of the hopes of success and assistance, while it would remove the apprehensions the enemy entertained of being assailed by a new coalition. It appeared to him that there was a great difference between the situation of France now, and the situation of France at the beginning of the last coalition, a difference which must operate greatly on the people in every country of Europe. At first the French began with declarations against other Governments and against religion. Now they had acted upon what they had announced, and proved to all Europe that their conduct had been more mischievous than their declarations had threatened. Their trade and commerce was destroyed, their navy was annihilated, their resources were almost exhausted; they had no longer the means of plunder they had formerly possessed—they had no longer the estates of the nobles and the clergy—they had no longer the confiscated property of those they murdered! He contended therefore, that in every point of view the chance of checking their power was now more favourable than it had ever been; and on these grounds he disapproved of the motion. He should not, however, detain the House longer in stating arguments which already had been so ably enforced.

Mr. TIERNEY and Mr. CANNING said each a few words in explanation; after which the motion was negatived without a division.

A RETURN of the GENERAL and STAFF OFFICERS now serving within *Great Britain*: distinguishing the Ranks of the different Officers; specifying the Divisions of the Kingdom where they are now serving; and shewing the Amount of Pay received by each Officer.

RANK of OFFICE.	—	PAY per Annum.
	HEAD QUARTERS.	£. s. d.
Commander in Chief, with four Aides de Camp, one Secretary, one Chaplain, and one Surgeon — — — }	Field Marshal his Royal Highness Frederick Duke of York, K. G. }	4,610 0 0
Adjutant General —	Gen. Sir W. Fawcett, K. B.	2,420 5 0
Deputy Adjutant General	Colonel Harry Calvert	345 15 0
Quarter-master General	Lieut. Gen. David Dundas	1,728 15 0
Deputy Quarter-master General — —	{ Lieut. Col. Rob. An- struther, acting for Col. Cha. Crauford }	345 15 0
Adjutant Quarter-mas- ter General — }	Lieut. Col. Daniel Paterfon	345 15 0
Ditto — ditto	Lieut. Col. William Eden	259 6 3
Barrack-master General	Major-gen. Oliver de Lancey	691 10 0
Deputy Barrack-mas- ter General — }	Colonel Edwin Hewgill	518 12 6
	Colonel William Cartwright	189 9 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Colonel Hon. Edward Bligh	189 9 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Col. William Lord Craven	189 9 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Col. Lord William Bentinck	189 9 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Colonel Edmund Viscount Dungarvon — —	189 9 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Colonel Coote Manningham	189 9 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Colonel Henry Geo. Grey	
	Colonel Hon. Edward Paget	
	Colonel Arthur Whetham	
	Colonel Brent Spencer	
Chaplain General —	John Gamble — —	345 15 0
Physician General —	Sir Lucas Pepys — —	345 15 0
Surgeon General —	Thomas Keate — —	691 10 0
Inspector of Regimental Hospitals — }	John Rush — —	172 17 6
Apothecary General	George Garnier — —	172 17 6
Inspector of Health	Sir Jerome Fitzpatrick	691 10 0
Principal Veterinary Surgeon — }	Edwin Colman — —	172 17 6
Military Commandant of Hospitals — }	Lieut. Colonel John Sontag	345 15 0

RANK of OFFICE.		PAY per Annum.			
		£.	s.	d.	
LONDON DISTRICT.					
Field Marshal; with four Aides de Camp —	{	His Royal Highness William Henry Duke of Gloucester, K. G. —	3,457	10	0
Lieutenant General, with two Aides de Camp		Charles Earl of Harrington	1,728	15	0
Major Generals, with one Aide de Camp each	{	Francis D'Oyley —	864	7	6
		Francis Lord Heathfield	864	7	6
		Hon. George J. Ludlow	864	7	6
		Francis Edward Gwyn	864	7	6
		Duncan Drummond —	864	7	6
Assistant Adjutant General		Lieut. Col. Cha. Stevenfon	259	6	3
Majors of Brigade - -	{	Lieut. Col. Alex. Smollett	172	17	6
		Major — Rofs —	172	17	6
		Captain James Gambier	172	17	6
		Captain Charles Stone —	172	17	6
NORTH-EAST DISTRICT.					
Lieutenant General, with two Aides de Camp	{	Thomas Musgrave —	1,728	15	0
Major Generals, with one Aide de Camp each		William Lord Visc. Fielding	864	7	6
Assistant Adjutant General		Andrew Cowell — —	864	7	6
Assistant Quarter-master General — —	{	Col. Charles William Esle	259	6	3
		Lieutenant-colonel William Gooch — —	259	6	3
Majors of Brigade -	{	Major George Vigoureux	172	17	6
		Captain William Maxwell	172	17	6
		Captain Francis Higginson	172	17	6
YORKSHIRE DISTRICT.					
Major Generals, with one Aide de Camp each	{	Henry Lord Mulgrave —	864	7	6
		Charles Lennox — —	864	7	6
		Charles Horneck - -	864	7	6
		Miles Staveley — —	864	7	6
Assistant Adjutant General		Major George Smith —	259	6	3
Major of Brigade —		Captain Hugh Maxwell -	172	17	9
EASTERN DISTRICT.					
General, with three Aides de Camp - -	{	Sir William Howe, K. B.	2,593	2	6
Lieutenant Generals, with two Aides de Camp each		Nesbitt Balfour — —	1,728	15	0
		George Garth — —	1,728	15	0

RANK of OFFICE,	<i>EASTERN DISTRICT</i> <i>continued.</i>	PAY per Annum.		
		<i>£.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Major Generals, with one Aide de Camp —	Alexander Ross —	864	7	6
	Napier C. Burton —	864	7	6
	John W. Egerton —	864	7	6
	John Earl of Chatham —	864	7	6
	Robert Manners —	864	7	6
	James Stewart —	864	7	6
Colonel, commanding a Flank Battalion —	John Whitlocke —	864	7	6
	William Scott —	414	18	0
Assistant Adjutant General	Lieut. Colonel Alex. Hope	259	6	3
Assistant Quarter-master General — —	Lieut. Colonel Bailey Wil- lington —	259	6	3
Majors of Brigade —	Captain Alexander Loraine	172	17	6
	Captain Nicholas Ramsay	172	17	6
	Captain Edmund J. S. Byng	172	17	6
	Captain William Langley	172	17	6
	Captain Robert Gordon	172	17	6
	Captain George Mackenzie	172	17	6
	Captain Edmund Filmer	172	17	6
	Captain W. J. Moleworth	172	17	6
<i>WESTERN DISTRICT.</i>				
General, with three Aides de Camp — —	Lord George Henry Lennox	2,593	2	6
Lieutenant General, with two Aides de Camp —	Richard Grenville —	1,728	15	0
Major Generals, with one Aide de Camp —	John Graves Simcoe —	864	7	6
	William Morfhead —	864	7	6
	Harry Burrard —	864	7	6
	Richard England —	864	7	6
Assistant Adjutant General	Lieut. Col. James Lofack	259	6	3
Assistant Quarter-master General — —	Captain John Rutherford	259	6	3
Majors of Brigade —	Captain George Quin	172	17	6
	Captain John Farquharson	172	17	6
<i>SOUTHERN DISTRICT.</i>				
General, with three Aides de Camp — —	Sir Charles Grey, K. B.	2,593	2	6
Lieutenant Generals, with two Aides de Camp —	Sir Robert Lawrie, Bart.	1,728	15	0
	Cornelius Cuyler —	1,728	15	0
	Samuel Hulse —	1,728	15	0

RANK of OFFICE.	SOUTHERN DISTRICT <i>continued.</i>	PAY per Annum.		
		£.	s.	d.
Major Generals, with one Aide de Camp each	His Highness Prince William	864	7	6
	Henry Edward Fox —	864	7	6
	Eyre Coote — —	864	7	6
	John Whyte — —	864	7	6
	Gordon Forbes — —	864	7	6
	Henry Pigot — —	864	7	6
	William Anne Villetes	864	7	6
	Lord Charles Somerset	864	7	6
Assistant Adjutant General	Colonel Gerrit Fisher	259	6	3
Assistant Quarter-master General — —	Lieutenant-colonel James Taylor — —	259	6	3
Majors of Brigade —	Captain Isaac P. Tinling	172	17	6
	Major William Hutchinson	172	17	6
	Captain Montagu Thorley	172	17	6
	Major John G. Clay —	172	17	6
	Captain William Grey	172	17	6
	Captain Charles Boycott	172	17	6
	Capt. Frederick Hardyman	172	17	6

*SOUTH - WEST
DISTRICT.*

General, with three Aides de Camp — —	Sir William Pitt, K. B.	2,593 2 6
Lieutenant General, with two Aides de Camp	Edmund Stevens — —	1,728 15 0
Major Generals, with one Aide de Camp	Thomas Murray — —	864 7 6
	George Earl of Pembroke	864 7 6
	Thomas Garth — —	864 7 6
	George Don — —	864 7 6
Assistant Adjutant General	Lieut. Col. Wm. Wynyard	259 6 3
Assistant Quarter-master General — —	Captain Ralph Gore —	259 6 3
Majors of Brigade —	Captain Henry P. Pulleine	172 17 6
	Captain George Laye	172 17 6
	Captain John Balcomb	172 17 6
	Major Henry Davis —	172 17 6

SEVERN DISTRICT.

Lieutenant General, with two Aides de Camp	James Rooke — —	1,728 15 0
Major of Brigade —	Captain Thomas Williamson	172 17 6

RANK of OFFICE.		PAY per Annum.
NORTH - WEST DISTRICT.		
Major General, with one Aide de Camp — }	Oliver Nicolls	£. s. d. 864 7 6
Major of Brigade —	Captain William Robison	172 17 6
NORTH BRITAIN.		
Commander of the Forces, as Lieutenant General, with two Aides de Camp, and one Secre- tary — — }	Sir Ralph Abercromby, K.B.	1,901 12 6
Lieutenant General, with two Aides de Camp }	Sir Robert Abercromby, } K. B. — — }	1,728 15 0
Major Generals, with one Aide de Camp — {	Andrew John Drummond	864 7 6
	Richard Vyfe — —	864 7 6
	Alexander Hay — —	864 7 6
Deputy Adjutant General	Colonel Alexander Mackay	172 17 6
Deputy Quarter-master General — — }	Lieutenant-colonel Alex- ander Dirom — }	172 17 6
Majors of Brigade — {	Lieutenant-colonel Nini- an Imrie — — }	172 17 6
	Captain John Lawrenson	172 17 6

War Office,
12th December 1798.

W. WINDHAM.

An ACCOUNT of the Value of the BRITISH MANUFACTURES exported from England in the Three Quarters ending the 10th of October 1797, and the 10th of October 1798; distinguishing the principal Articles, and the Exportations to the East Indies and China from the Exports to all other Parts.

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Vol. VII.

	Three Quarters, ending the 10th of October 1797.			Three Quarters, ending the 10th of October 1798.		
	All Countries, except India and China.	East Indies and China.		All Countries except India and China.	East Indies and China.	
Allum —	£. s. d. 26,127 6 7	£. s. d. 82 15 5	—	£. s. d. 17,357 19 3	£. s. d. 3,360 0 0	—
Apothecary ware —	23,931 11 0	4,120 0 0	—	26,478 8 6	1 5 0	—
Apparel, garments —	11,813 10 0	1 15 0	—	24,958 15 0	2,820 0 0	—
Bark, tanners —	24,835 8 0	—	—	26,912 12 6	4,484 0 0	—
Beer —	45,223 3 0	2,800 0 0	—	42,360 9 4	76,500 0 0	—
Books, printed —	5,902 0 0	6,182 0 0	—	11,073 7 10	—	—
Bricks —	1,119 6 0	—	—	1,005 11 3	—	—
Brass, wrought —	54,016 17 6	108,315 0 0	—	74,524 10 0	—	—
wire —	2,355 5 0	—	—	1,443 19 4	—	—
Cabinet ware —	12,514 15 0	—	—	23,821 0 9	—	—
Candles, tallow —	28,701 15 9	214 15 3	—	36,005 14 4	187 17 6	—
wax or spermaceti —	1,167 0 0	595 18 9	—	1,668 8 9	275 0 0	—
Cards, playing —	606 13 2	85 4 4	—	627 18 2	41 12 6	—
Cattle, cows and oxen —	9,295 0 0	—	—	11,869 0 0	—	—
horses —	12,970 0 0	—	—	17,220 0 0	—	—

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Cattle, mules	390	0	0	—	—	—	6,000	0	0	—	—	—	1,520	0	0
Chariots and coaches	7,025	0	0	7,680	0	0	9,040	0	0	—	—	—	5,008	0	0
Coals, Newcastle measure	93,555	6	0	675 18 0	—	—	117,525	12	0	—	—	—	115,059	13	9
Winton	244,023	0	0	—	—	—	230,915	14	0	—	—	—	1,900	19	6
canal	323 18 0	—	—	—	—	—	539 10 0	—	—	—	—	—	8	11	0
great	1,027 10 0	—	—	—	—	—	2,467 9 3	—	—	—	—	—	8,341	19	6
culm, Newcastle	675 0 0	—	—	—	—	—	1,311 0 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Winchester measure	4,390 5 8	—	—	—	—	—	2,637 15 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Confectionary	345 5 0	—	—	—	—	—	1,301 12 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Colours for painters	47,447 13 0	—	—	1,920 0 0	—	—	55,210 13 3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Copper, wrought	119,176 5 0	—	—	10,140 0 0	—	—	141,944 2 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
unwrought	10,501 10 3	—	—	137,304 0 0	—	—	2,667 1 1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Copperas	14,306 9 8	—	—	—	—	—	7,403 17 11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cordage	26,946 1 0	—	—	5,460 18 4	—	—	28,657 2 4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Corn, barley	3,064 15 0	—	—	129 7 0	—	—	466 14 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
beans	2,444 13 0	—	—	—	—	—	5,769 9 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
malt	5,709 2 9	—	—	—	—	—	6,108 7 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
oats	3,960 9 4	—	—	—	—	—	3,714 6 9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
pease	1,806 3 0	—	—	405 0 0	—	—	2,562 0 0	—	—	—	—	—	67	4	0
wheat	10,687 19 0	—	—	—	—	—	857 5 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ditto flour	17,251 10 10	—	—	1,230 0 0	—	—	47,666 10 8	—	—	—	—	—	910	0	0
Cottons and linens, checked	144,781 7 6	—	—	—	—	—	192,506 19 1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
printed	236,444 18 0	—	—	720 0 0	—	—	149,358 14 4	—	—	—	—	—	1,602	0	0
6. to 18. before printed	704,173 19 0	—	—	1,167 10 0	—	—	783,153 4 10	—	—	—	—	—	3,660	6	0
under 3s. before dyed	10,440 17 6	—	—	—	—	—	16,363 10 10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
dumity	14,473 13 0	—	—	—	—	—	53,460 13 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
fustians	94,371 0 0	—	—	—	—	—	55,373 0 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Manchester	97,612 1 0	—	—	—	—	—	238,747 4 2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Cottons, stuffs, plain	278,891	4	0	—	—	—	225,549	16	0	—	—	—

	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.
Cottons, stuffs, plain	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— printed	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cottons, white	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— twist	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cyder	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Drugs, Epfom and Glauber salts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— Sal Armoniac	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fish, cod, dry	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— herrings, red	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— white	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— pilchards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— salmon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fishing tackle	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Flax, drest	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Glass, and earthen ware	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— green	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— green bottles	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— white flint	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— for windows	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gloves, plain leather	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grindlestones	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gunpowder	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Haberdashery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hair, horse	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hops	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hoops, barrel	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— of several forts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Iron, bar	5,164	15	10	4,500	0	0	13,098	13	0	800	0	0
— cast	6,723	7	10	60	0	0	7,298	17	8			
— nails	13,192	2	10	15,408	15	0	32,197	13	9	11,574	10	0
— ordnance	—	—	—	9,902	0	0						
— wrought	524,360	14	4	107,435	2	2	602,335	11	8	76,307	0	0
Lead and shot	58,266	1	0	33,304	15	5	49,949	3	2	13,440	3	10
— ore	2,542	7	8	—	—	—	3,971	13	2			
— red	14,336	16	0	—	—	—	9,381	12	0			
— white	4,102	7	1	—	—	—	7,629	0	3			
Leather, fanned	24,180	13	1	216	6	3	20,987	0	0	171	10	0
— wrought	50,564	12	6	1,802	5	0	59,776	8	6	2,086	17	6
Lime	2,187	10	4	—	—	—	3,080	8	9			
Linen, plain, not for bounty	36,690	10	0	—	—	—	58,770	5	0			
— cambricks	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,712	10	0			
— Bounty, 6d. to 18s. per yard	192,191	9	0	354	6	0	314,010	11	0	679	13	0
— buckrams	1,855	13	0	—	—	—	2,085	5	6			
— checked, 7d. to 18d.	20,328	5	7	57	18	4	32,070	1	0	9	5	5
— diaper, 6d. to 18d.	679	16	0	—	—	—	1,950	6	0			
— sheeting	681	7	0	—	—	—	1,181	18	0			
— fail cloth	45,245	13	0	6,409	7	0	51,924	19	6	12,172	5	0
— muslins	137,488	19	6	—	—	—	329,791	18	6			
— handkerchiefs	22,067	19	10	—	—	—	42,631	8	0			
— muslinets	6,924	14	6	—	—	—	25,965	10	6			
— other linens	1,048	16	6	—	—	—	4,592	14	9			
Litharge of lead	3,399	5	0	—	—	—	5,264	7	9			
Melasses	15,152	5	6	—	—	—	13,937	4	11			
Military stores	—	—	—	40,000	0	0	2,346	17	6	46,037	2	6

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Oil, linseed	2,087	2	0	—	—	—	4,120	1	0			
— train	5,332	10	3	—	—	—	15,100	5	0			
— vitriol	8,102	15	0	—	—	—	5,201	1	3			

DEBATES.

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	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Oil, linseed	2,087	2	0	—	—	—	4,120	1	0	—	—	—
— train	5,332	10	3	—	—	—	15,100	5	0	—	—	—
— vitriol	8,192	15	0	—	—	—	5,291	1	3	—	—	—
Pantiles	437	2	3	1,466	5	0	646	9	0	1,020	0	0
Pewter	47,682	10	0	6,020	0	0	50,529	10	0	4,690	0	0
Pictures or prints	375	7	6	1,050	0	0	80	12	6	900	0	0
Plate, wrought silver	23,029	5	3	4,646	7	3	28,305	8	7	3,147	0	0
Provisions, bacon and hams	17,591	18	1	2,620	16	0	38,828	11	5	113	8	0
— beef and pork	2,832	10	0	1,669	5	0	9,466	0	0	1,685	5	0
— — — — — tripes	1,715	0	0	—	—	—	2,765	0	0	—	—	—
— — — — — biscuit	19,483	3	0	—	—	—	23,480	6	3	152	8	0
— — — — — cheefe	10,361	9	6	890	8	0	20,166	5	1	—	—	—
— — — — — potatoes	909	0	0	—	—	—	1,565	16	0	—	—	—
— — — — — butter	518	14	0	741	0	0	1,788	15	3	58	10	0
Quilting	3,025	7	0	—	—	—	41,115	17	0	—	—	—
Rosin	173	11	10	—	—	—	402	1	7	—	—	—
Salt, rock	28,936	0	10	—	—	—	22,576	19	4	—	—	—
— white	80,097	13	6	75	2	0	98,351	6	8	59	13	4
Seeds, clover	2,994	0	0	—	—	—	1,653	0	0	—	—	—
— — — — — garden	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,458	2	3	—	—	—
Silk, in pieces	184,417	16	10	881	2	6	130,799	0	11	1,107	15	0
— — — — — sewing	81,145	12	9	1,027	13	9	61,531	12	11	1,091	10	0
Skins, coney	557	9	2	1,614	12	0	585	6	0	1,649	11	0
— deer, British drest	1,101	13	0	—	—	—	1,569	13	0	—	—	—
— — — — — other skins	688	14	6	—	—	—	728	7	6	2	17	3
Soap, hard	26,136	0	0	3,510	0	0	33,388	13	1	2,892	0	0
Spelter	4,472	10	0	—	—	—	18,697	12	0	—	—	—
Spirits, British	9,245	16	0	262	0	0	43,360	8	3	900	0	0

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Starch	1,526	6	3	—	—	—	78	0	8	2,930	15	6	68	0	0
Stained paper	3,452	10	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,416	7	0	—	—	—
Stationary	15,744	6	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	22,072	14	9	—	—	—
Steel	18,927	18	0	46,319	12	6	—	—	—	9,822	0	10	31,383	0	0
Stockings, thread	80,880	5	8	1,750	0	0	—	—	—	113,773	3	0	1,390	0	0
Stones, slate	3,602	1	7	78	0	8	—	—	—	3,378	18	0	180	0	0
Sugar, refined	356,343	9	7	361	4	0	—	—	—	303,575	5	0	630	8	9
— bastard	2,899	19	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	129	1	3	—	—	—
Thread	4,824	0	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	10,983	12	0	—	—	—
Tin	57,086	0	9	41,584	9	0	—	—	—	80,890	18	2	51,319	0	0
Tin plates	29,923	0	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	48,753	4	1	—	—	—
Tobacco pipes	4,574	17	0	60	0	0	—	—	—	3,230	0	0	40	0	0
Tow	1,949	5	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	252	10	0	—	—	—
Vinegar	2,313	0	0	850	0	0	—	—	—	1,626	0	0	490	0	0
Watches, gold	2,070	0	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,830	0	0	315	0	0
— metal	620	0	0	80	0	0	—	—	—	1,350	0	0	—	—	—
— silver	42,625	0	0	322	10	0	—	—	—	28,121	5	0	—	—	—
Whalebone	2,590	0	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,316	17	6	—	—	—
Wool, sheeps	1,615	11	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,462	6	0	351,193	6	4
Woollen goods	3,571,682	13	10	405,759	8	0	—	—	—	4,625,109	2	7	—	—	—
Yarn, cotton	9,602	17	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	31,694	9	6	193,430	0	0
Miscellaneous	1,356,948	1	6	918,077	19	6	—	—	—	1,505,273	11	1	—	—	—
TOTAL	10,071,029	13	8	1,963,639	3	11	12,234,328	14	7	1,050,730	3	1	—	—	—

THOMAS IRVING,
Inspector General of the Imports and
Exports of Great Britain, &c.

Inspector-General's Office,
Custom House, London,
December 4th, 1798.

A LIST
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A LIST of the Principal Articles of BRITISH MANUFACTURES exported from *England* in the Quarter ending the 10th of October 1798: with the RATE PER CENTUM which the declared Value by the Exporters exceeds, or is less than the Rates or Estimates by which the same Goods are valued in the Books of the Inspector General of the Customs.

	RATE per Centum which the declared value exceeds the official value.			RATE per Cen- tum which the official value exceeds the de- clared value.		
	Rate per Cent.			Rate per Cent.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Apothecary ware - - -	333	0	0			
Beer - - - - -	106	0	0			
Books, printed - - -	447	0	0			
Brafs, wrought - - -	158	0	0			
Candles, tallow - - -	58	0	0			
Chariots - - - - -	131	0	0			
Coaches - - - - -	158	0	0			
Copper, wrought - - -	19	0	0			
— unwrought - - -	1,409	0	0			
Cordage - - - - -	61	0	0			
Coarse glass and earthen ware -	334	0	0			
Glass for windows - - -	207	0	0			
— white flint - - -	426	0	0			
Gunpowder - - - - -	106	0	0			
Haberdashery - - - -	1,147	0	0			
Hats, beaver - - - -	—	—	—	10	0	0
— felt - - - - -	116	0	0			
Horses - - - - -	108	0	0			
Iron, wrought - - - -	103	0	0			
Lead - - - - -	53	0	0			
Leather, tanned - - -	283	0	0			
— wrought - - - - -	60	0	0			
Linen, plain for bounty - -	—	—	—	13	0	0

	RATE per Centum which the declared value exceeds the official value.			RATE per Cen- tum which the official value exceeds the de- clared value.		
	Rate per Cent.			Rate per Cent.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Linen, checked - - - -	—	—		6	0	0
— fail cloth - - - -	—	—		38	0	0
Melasses - - - -	75	0	0			
Pictures or prints - - - -	6,053	0	0			
Pewter - - - -	58	0	0			
Provisions, cheese - - - -	108	0	0			
Silk, wrought - - - -	113	0	0			
— sewing - - - -	54	0	0			
Tin - - - -	10	0	0			
Woollen goods - - - -	38	0	0			

THOMAS IRVING,
Inspector General of the Imports and
Exports of Great Britain, &c.

The Inspector General thinks it necessary to annex the following explanatory note of the mode by which the above Rates per Centum are obtained :—

The quantities exported to every part of the world, with the declared values by the merchants exporters, are extracted from the bills of entry, and upon the same quantities the values are cast agreeably to the ancient rates, by which the manufactures of this kingdom exported have been estimated in the books of the Inspector General for upwards of a century past ; from whence it will appear in what proportion the value, as now stated by the declaration of the exporter, differs from the estimated value on which the accounts have been heretofore ascertained.

By thus extracting the entries of the quantity and declared value exported to every country, the true average value is ascertained, particularly on those articles which, though classed under one general head, vary materially in the constituent parts in quality and price, such as in wrought iron, from the finest article of polished steel to the ploughshare, &c.

Inspector-General's Office, Custom House,
London, December 3, 1798.

An ACCOUNT of the Value of the FOREIGN MERCHAN-
DIZE exported from England in the Three Quarters ending
the 10th of October 1797 and the 10th of October 1798 :
distinguiſhing each Article and each Period.

	Three Quarters, ending 10th October 1797.			Three Quarters, ending 10th October 1798.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Aſhes, pearl — —	3,915	0	0	10,896	17	8
— pot — —	4,378	10	1	17,677	12	9
Barilla — —	1,457	4	0	3,650	5	6
Beads, Mother o' Pearl —	2,590	8	0	1,575	5	8
Brimſtone — —	857	6	7	2,756	10	0
Bugle, great — —	8,606	17	0	4,664	19	6
Canes, walking — —	506	0	0	348	0	0
China ware — —	3,528	3	10	1,536	4	1
Corn, wheat — —	28,373	10	0	16,779	10	0
Drugs, Almonds, bitter	1,222	6	4	305	4	0
— Borax, refined	8,866	11	0	3,271	16	0
— — unrefined	8,772	11	6			
— Camphire, refined	2,465	0	6	3,327	0	0
— Caſſia, fiſtula	91	13	1	2,493	5	0
— Lignea	3,070	16	0	2,226	6	6
— Caſtoreum —	7,578	7	6	1,808	2	0
— Cortex, Peru	4,313	1	3	2,482	7	0
— Ginfang —	2,274	14	0	904	16	0
— Gum, Senegal	1,552	0	0	1,129	4	6
— Rhubarb —	48,611	11	3	18,643	15	0
— Saccarum Saturni	1,169	0	0	105	12	0
— Succus Liquoritiæ	60	4	0	2,454	10	0
Dry Stuffs, Annotto	1,961	7	11	5,906	10	10
— Cochineal	43,819	3	9	2,859	9	4
— Fuſtic —	18,324	11	2	12,039	16	2
— Indigo —	532,663	10	4	247,965	13	8
— Logwood	31,117	9	0	16,281	10	0
— Madder —	2,331	7	10	3,391	0	6
— Mahogany	4,091	10	0	3,449	1	11
— Nicoragua	3,016	16	0	2,835	1	9
— Red Wood	5,254	7	4	1,976	8	0
— Saffron —	474	12	0	238	14	10
— Shellack —	4,457	17	6	1,225	2	10
Elephants' teeth —	5,926	4	3	4,369	15	8
Fiſh, cod —	20,518	0	0	20,043	0	0
— ſtock —	38	18	9	45	3	9
Flax, rough —	2,397	0	0	5,548	18	1

	Three Quarters, ending 10th October 1797.			Three Quarters, ending 10th October 1798.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Grocery, Cinnamon	4,404	15	0	46,479	18	9
— Cocoa	34,713	0	0	64,305	1	5
— Coffee	2,938	24	6	4,323	459	7
— Cloves	1,456	2	6	34,207	10	0
— Currants	2,287	12	5	1,530	0	7
— Ginger	24,029	2	0	28,764	10	4
— Mace	1,090	2	6	10,550	14	0
— Nutmegs	2,267	15	4	4,212	5	10
— Pepper	118,612	4	4	271,144	0	4
— Pimento	15,074	13	6	9,808	18	6
— Raisins, Lexia	200	5	10	1,860	9	3
— Rice	44,807	6	9	47,064	11	2
— Sago, E. India	681	16	0	405	6	0
— Sugar	942,984	10	4	1,020,781	7	9
— Tea	215,341	7	10	313,692	14	9
— Turmeric	2,710	19	2	4,408	5	5
Hats, chip	875	8	4			
Hemp, rough	3,007	10	0	17,265	2	0
Hides, Indian	48,592	7	0	16,817	8	0
— Ox or Cow	30,047	8	0	7,989	5	6
Iron, bar	46,338	18	0	31,539	13	2
Linen, Canvas, spruce	2,475	1	10	3,339	19	5
— Germany, narrow	18,980	17	4	40,649	9	10
— Irish, no bounty	20,051	7	1	71,081	14	0
— 6d. to 18s.	128,947	6	0	168,918	14	6
— Sheetting	573	3	0	1,194	17	0
— at value	8,110	0	0	35,735	0	0
— Lawns, not Hol- land, W ^a .	226	0	0	865	8	0
— Russia, broad, ab. 22 $\frac{1}{2}$	10,314	19	5	7,796	5	0
— ab. 31 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,899	1	4	2,051	0	0
— ab. 36	25,203	10	0	30,706	0	0
Oil, ordinary	1,143	7	5	1,085	15	0
— fallad	789	7	0	1,543	8	0
Piece Goods } of India, } Callicoes	1,293,079	7	10	977,327	10	1
— — — — — } Muslins	541,638	12	8	284,307	4	1
— — — — — } Nankeens	18,322	19	5	10,757	2	3
— — — — — } Prohibited	516,041	19	3	567,489	10	3
Provisions, beef	22,272	11	4	24,659	1	4
— butter	10,857	19	7	34,049	3	0
— pork	17,903	4	0	41,469	17	4
Salt-petr	22,033	15	7	16,735	9	4
Seeds, linfeed	2,722	7	0	340	19	0
Silk, Bengal raw	25,846	12	0	12,536	11	0
— China raw	2,200	18	0	1,991	12	0
— Italian raw	—	—	—	1,210	8	0
— thrown	12,927	0	0	54,135	0	0

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	Three Quarters, ending 10th October 1797.			Three Quarters, ending 10th October 1798.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Skins. Bear, black	6,647	0	0	2,034	18	0
Beaver	6,290	18	0	3,130	14	6
Deer in hair	31,665	3	0	14,182	16	0
Martin	5,926	6	10	6,847	0	0
Mink	2,685	13	0	2,697	0	0
Otter	8,623	16	0	6,385	0	0
Raccoon	4,517	17	4	3,052	2	0
Wolf	3,394	4	0	3,226	4	0
Spirits, Brandy	5,289	0	0	19,483	10	0
Geneva	5,469	15	0	8,034	0	0
Rum	106,066	4	0	46,698	0	0
Steel, Long	48	10	0	250	12	4
Tallow	759	5	7	3,750	10	0
Tar	3,663	16	8	2,314	0	0
Tobacco	190,017	0	9	164,982	4	6
manufactured	21,720	1	0	12,625	0	0
Turpentine	102	13	7	147	11	4
Wine, French	48,337	14	10	98,563	2	6
Madeira	2,084	15	2	1,504	5	8
Port	19,923	6	7	20,779	13	4
Rhenish	872	7	1	1,226	11	4
Spanish	5,119	0	6	10,092	16	0
Wood Staves	6,481	17	10	8,148	11	0
Wool, Cotton	16,146	18	4	16,317	5	4
Spanish	1,358	6	0	6,403	14	0
Yarn Mohair	13,831	12	0	1,471	12	0
Other articles	98,468	2	8	152,332	10	6
TOTAL	8,654,093	15	9	9,692,094	12	8

THOMAS IRVING,
Inspector General of the Imports and
Exports of Great Britain, &c.

Inspector-General's Office,
Custom House, London;
December 3d, 1798.

Wednesday, December 12.

The House resolved itself into a Committee on the bill for committing, for a time to be limited, an act passed last session for enabling His Majesty to accept of the voluntary offers of the English militia regiments to extend their services to Ireland.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he had only to remark to the Committee, that the time to which he wished to limit the operation of the bill was to one month after the commencement of the next session. He had also a clause to propose, which would sufficiently characterize the spirit of the act, and the object of this clause was, that no persons should be called upon to serve, but such as had already made a voluntary offer of their services, or who might hereafter voluntarily engage in such service.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR said, he last year had opposed this bill, because he thought it unconstitutional; even now he wished it to be understood, that he did not consent to it. He took this opportunity of saying, however, that the conduct of the noble Marquis, who now presided over the affairs of Ireland, had his perfect concurrence; he now saw the affairs of Ireland in a better situation than they had been for many years. He both saw and felt this to be the case.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that as it had frequently been the practice with gentlemen who last year reprobated the system pursued in Ireland, he wished to say a few words against the conclusion which this language was intended to infer. He was perfectly aware of the merit of the noble Marquis now at the head of affairs in Ireland in every situation he had filled: at the same time, he was not blind to the merits of others. This much he was ready to say, that to the firmness, the moderation, the wisdom, and the vigour of the noble Lord who preceded the noble Marquis, was it owing that the latter had an opportunity to pursue at all any measures for the safety of Ireland.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR hoped nothing that had dropped from him should in the least be construed into any thing like blame on the conduct of the noble Earl who preceded the noble Marquis. He had the honour of some personal acquaintance with that noble Earl, and it was impossible for any words he could make use of, to do justice to the candour, the mildness, the moderation, and generosity of that worthy Nobleman; both to his private and public virtues, he was always ready to pay a due tribute of applause.

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Mr. JONES had, on a former occasion, voted for the bill as a measure of State necessity, though, in a constitutional point of view, he neither then, nor could he now, approve of it. In his opinion, Ireland was under great obligations to the Ministers of the country, and he hoped they would pursue every fair means of restoring safety and tranquillity to that distracted country.

Mr. ELLISON said, he would vote for this bill, and for every such bill which Ministers would introduce for extinguishing any thing like Rebellion, or averting the dangers to which it might expose us : for their conduct, in the affairs of Ireland, they had his most heartfelt gratitude, as they ought to have that of every well-wisher to the safety and prosperity of the British empire, and he trusted they would not relax in their vigilance and activity as long as there remained in Ireland a single Rebel in arms.

The clause was then read and agreed to.

Thursday, December 13.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House on the bill to alter, amend, and enlarge the provisions of the Land-tax Sale Bill.

The question being put, that the Speaker do now leave the chair,

Mr. JONES said, it was of very little use for so helpless an individual as himself to say any thing upon this bill, after the marked, manifest, and avowed indifference of the Chancellor of the Exchequer towards every thing that was said against the measure. This bill was said to be a measure to give effect to the former bill ; and so, indeed, the preamble indicated. He could not oppose any modification of the former bill, after all that had been said upon it. If it should appear from one corner of this country to the other, that this bill was a good one, however violent he had been against it, (and against it he was from principle,) he should be glad to hear it. He had acted upon this measure from his own judgement. If he was wrong, he should have nobody to blame ; if right, nobody to praise for it. However, he retained his opinion upon one part of the bill, and he had no idea that any thing could ever change it ; that was, that the bill was an unconstitutional measure. Good, or bad, in any other respect, it was a violence to the Constitution of England. He believed he was borne out in that assertion by the best authority ; he meant De Lolme, on the Constitution of England ; who stated, that the land tax, if made perpetual, might be

applied to the payment of a standing army. He should say no more, but leave the bill to the country, to consider whether it was good or bad.

Mr. Speaker then left the chair; and after various clauses were offered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and adopted by the Committee, who went through the bill, the House being resumed, the report was received, immediately read, and ordered to be taken into farther consideration on Monday next.

Friday, December 14.

Mr. HOBART brought up the report of the Committee on the bill for repealing the Assessed Taxes, and imposing in their stead a general tax on income. On the question that the report be taken into farther consideration,

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR spoke to the following effect:—
I arise, Sir, to oppose the motion made by the right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Pitt), for taking into our farther consideration the bill which he has proposed, from the full conviction, that the present is so exceptionable a measure, that it is impossible, by the efforts of any Committee whatever, to make it entitled to the approbation of the House; and I am induced thus early to take the liberty of addressing myself to you, because I think that it is a duty peculiarly incumbent upon those, who have directed their attention to financial inquiries, to prevent, by every possible exertion, the passing of such a bill into a law. I shall endeavour, however, with as much brevity as the importance of the question will admit of, to explain what has occurred to me on this interesting subject.

The House is fully aware, that for raising those extraordinary supplies which are necessary to defray the expences of war, one, of four measures, has been usually adopted. In some countries, a treasure has been accumulated for that purpose in time of peace; in others, the necessary supplies have been raised within the year. According to a third plan, the sums wanted have been levied by compulsive loans, of which there was lately an instance under the directorial tyranny of France. The last plan, is that of raising money by means of voluntary loans, or through the medium of what is called *the funding system*; a mode of raising money which some gentlemen are inclined to reprobate, because they only contemplate its defects, but which I have ever considered as the climax of financial invention, the greatest of all political discoveries, the most valuable mine that ever a nation was possessed of, and, in a peculiar manner,

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the source of the strength, the prosperity, and the happiness of this country. Indeed, Sir, (without tiring the House by a statement of the variety of arguments that might be urged in its favour, with which I am persuaded that every individual who now hears me, must be already familiarly acquainted), it may be sufficient to remark, that if we had attempted to carry on our wars on any other plan, in consequence of the inability of the subject to bear the pressure of additional taxes, either those wars must have been in the highest degree unsuccessful, from the want of funds to carry them on, or the people would have been driven, by oppression and despair, into a state of insurrection; nor could we have preserved, as we have hitherto been fortunately enabled to do, amidst all the calamities of war, that best source of public prosperity, the means of industry and of re-production.

But, we are told, that we have funded too much already; that the price of stocks is low; that money cannot be borrowed in large sums, except on very disadvantageous terms; that we ought to husband the funding system; that we must pay a salvage for the protection of our property; and, above all, that we are now under the necessity of resorting to a new financial expedient, namely, that of borrowing a part, and of raising the remainder of the extraordinary supplies by taxes within the year.

There can hardly be, in my opinion, a more erroneous idea. If the funding system is at all to be abandoned, instead of pursuing this miserable expedient, the result of irresolution and timidity, we ought manfully to resolve to raise, not the half, but the whole supplies within the year. By following the plan that is proposed, we shall neither enjoy the advantages of the one system, nor of the other, whilst we must feel the disadvantages of both.

If all the taxes were raised within the year, the money of the kingdom would not be collected in the metropolis, for the purposes of a loan; so that there would be a greater quantity of wealth in the country, applicable to the payment of the extraordinary taxes to be imposed; whereas, if we have both a loan in London, and extraordinary contributions in the country, it is absurd to imagine, that the circulating wealth of the nation will be equally divided: hence, there must be either a deficiency of money in the country, to pay the taxes, or a want of money in the capital, to furnish the loan.

It is next contended, that the new system has already answered in practice; and to it, we are told, ought to be attributed, the present flourishing state of our public credit, and what is called the high price of stocks. There never were more groundless assertions.

During the American war, the lowest price that the funds ever

reached, was in February 1782, when the 3 *per cents.* were never lower than $53\frac{1}{8}$, though no artificial means were made use of to buoy them up by means of weekly purchases. When the bargain for the loan was concluded in April last, the 3 *per cent.* consols were above 48; they are now at 54. Is it possible to suppose, therefore, that this plan has at all materially contributed to increase the price of stocks: the difference is 6 *per cent.* Can no other cause be assigned for that rise, but the measure now under contemplation? Is nothing, for instance, to be attributed to the land-tax redemption bill, which, I am informed, has partially succeeded in particular districts, and the beneficial consequences of which we hear so much of on other occasions? nothing to the astonishing increase of our commercial wealth, and the improvement of our agricultural resources; and nothing to our naval victories? to which, indeed, more than to the financial measures of the right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Pitt), our present prosperous situation ought to be ascribed. In short, four causes are assigned for this rise of 6 *per cent.* as suits best the convenience of the Minister. Let us give each of them a fair proportion, namely, $1\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* Let us suppose that we have occasion for twenty-five millions this year, and that we borrow the whole, instead of raising a part on the new principle, within the year, the difference, at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.*, is but 375000*l.* and for that paltry and miserable sum, the whole nation is to be subjected to the grievous oppression of this intolerable measure.

Let us admit, however, for the sake of argument, that it is wise and politic to raise a part of the supplies within the year, and that it has been found beneficial in practice; it next becomes a matter of question, whether the assessed-tax bill of last year, is not as fair a mode of raising that contribution, as the new system that is suggested? And after all the arguments used in favour of that bill, and the strong language in which it was supported in both Houses, it is a circumstance hardly to be credited, that it should now be proposed to repeal that plan, and to substitute another in its stead. If the Members of this House in particular, were to recollect the many strong declarations which were made in its favour, from authorities they are, in general, accustomed to listen to with peculiar attention and respect, they would probably hesitate, in regard to the adoption of a new system, for raising any part of the supplies within the year.

Indeed the question is, whether it is not better to have some criterion, than none at all? By having a criterion, you stand some chance of preventing evasion, and, above all, you render a harsh inquisitorial disclosure of property unnecessary: but if you have

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none, unless the most oppressive and tyrannical system is pursued, the whole income you can expect to derive from the measure, will depend on the voluntary seal, and, unfortunately, the lax morality, of the great body of the people, who have already shown, what may be expected from them, when you appeal to their consciences on the subject of taxation.

But if a new plan must be adopted, and if property, instead of expenditure, must be attacked, it becomes a matter of nice discussion, whether the extraordinary contribution should be raised by a tax on capital, or a tax on income, or by blending the two together, which, though the most complicated, yet being unquestionably the justest, ought to be preferred. What I mean is, that every man should pay, instead of 10 *per cent.* on his income, $\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* on his capital, and 5 *per cent.* on his income, by which persons who had no capital, would be greatly relieved, and those who were possessed of considerable property, would pay more in proportion to their opulence, than under the system that is proposed.

Almost the only objection to this plan is, the difficulty of ascertaining the value of a man's capital. But is it not the same in regard to his income, unless it arises from some fixed and regular stipend, and is liable to no uncertainty of deduction? Let us consider this important part of the subject, in the three great lines, of a landed income, of a commercial income, and of a professional income.

A landed income may be supposed the most certain and permanent, and in some particular instances it may be so; but, in general, a person of landed property, after deducting every public tax or imposition to which he is liable, is subject to a variety of burdens.

In the first place, he is frequently under the necessity of being at very heavy legal expences for preserving his property, and he is clearly entitled to deduct those expences, as it is proposed that the public shall avail itself of that part of his income, by taxing the gentlemen of the law. In the second place, he is under the necessity of spending money in the improvement of his estates, as in draining, fencing, building, &c. And in the third place, any person of landed property is subject to a variety of deductions in consequence of the rank he holds in the state; he is obliged to act as sheriff, as justice of the peace, and other public situations, without any recompence or emolument whatsoever; and if any plan is in agitation for building a bridge, for making a turnpike road, or forming a canal, which may ultimately prove of material consequence to the neighbourhood, a gentleman of landed property must subscribe for

all such measures, unless it is intended to check by law the progress of public improvement.

It is still more difficult to ascertain the income of the commercial individual, whose capital and income, indeed, are in fact so intimately combined together, that it is impossible to separate them. The income of a commercial man, also, depends upon a variety of circumstances besides his capital; it depends on the situation in which he happens to be placed, the connections which he has formed or inherited, the talents which he employs in his business, and the industry with which he prosecutes it. Are we to tax situation? That was given up in the case of the famous shop-tax. Are we to tax the advantage derived from connection? It would be the first time that any individual ever paid any demand to the Exchequer, for having a number of friends, and probably deserving them. Are we to tax talents? It would be a strange circumstance in finance to impose burdens upon those, by whose ingenuity new arts were discovered, or the old ones improved; who contribute so essentially to enrich the nation, and who are justly accounted the surest source of its commercial prosperity. Or, above all, are we to tax industry? If so, the man that is idle and profligate will pay nothing; whereas the sober and industrious will be burdened in proportion to their exertions.

Let us next consider how professional men can ascertain their incomes. To what a variety of casualties are they not exposed! They may be disabled by sickness; they may be injured by ill-founded personal, or even political prejudices entertained against them; or their profits may be impaired by public calamity and distress: indeed, many of them must be ruined by this bill, which must diminish, in various instances, their professional business; and all of them will be entitled to the deduction of a full third of their clear income, which every prudent professional man does usually deduct, to form a provision for himself in his old age, and a capital for his family at his death.

These circumstances prove, that it is as difficult to estimate income, as to ascertain the value of capital, and are strongly in favour of that blended system, which seems to be the only just principle on which such a tax or contribution as this can be imposed.

Indeed, how is it possible to demand, at the same rate, from a person who has an income without a capital, and from one who has both income and capital? One person, for instance, draws his subsistence from an income of 600*l.* a year, from the profession of the law; at 10 *per cent.* he is charged with 60*l.* to the Exchequer, which he must deduct from his income. Another person has

20,000*l.* of 3 *per cent.* consolidated annuities, producing him 600*l.* At 10 *per cent.* he will only pay 60*l.* also, though, by selling only about 120*l.* of his 3 *per cents.*, according to the price of the stocks, he pays his tax, and only loses about 3*l.* 12*s.* *per annum* of his income. Where then is that boasted equality, which is said to be so much in favour of this plan, and which renders it so infinitely superior to every other?

On these grounds I cannot help thinking, that if the measure is at all to be adopted, it ought to be altered on the principle which I have now taken the liberty of recommending, namely, that of laying the tax, partly on capital and partly on income.

Let us now, Sir, proceed to consider the specific plan that is submitted to our consideration in the present bill.

The House must still recollect the elaborate speech, in which the right honourable gentleman laid before us a general view of the income, supposed to be enjoyed by all the various classes of the community. In some points I may differ with him; and when I heard the right honourable gentleman expressing himself with so much doubt respecting various particulars, and resting on the antiquated notions of Davenant, and the guesses of modern authorities, I could not help wishing that the right honourable gentleman had given more assistance to an institution I had the honour of suggesting; I mean, Sir, the Board of Agriculture, by whom all these points, had it been properly supported, would have been, before this time, fully ascertained. It has ever been a favourite opinion with me, that no country could be well governed, unless its real situation was thoroughly known—" *Ad consilium de republica dandum, caput est, nosse rempublicam.*" Indeed, had not the progress of that institution been checked, by those who were regardless of the interests of the country they governed, provided they could gratify their own personal spleen and resentment, we should now have been debating, not on loose calculations and uncertain data, but on a general report on the state of the country, founded on authentic information, which it would have been in my power, before this time, to have laid upon the table of this House.

But let us suppose that the calculations of the right honourable gentleman, if not perfectly just, yet are sufficiently accurate for the purposes of discussion; and that the various classes of the community, which he has enumerated, have an income of one hundred millions *per annum*; yet I question much, whether they really can afford to pay any thing like so large a sum as ten millions, in the course of one year, in addition to the thirty millions (including the expence of the collection) which they already yield to the Exchequer.

The persons who will be subjected to this new tax on income, may be divided into three classes.

The first consists of those who already save a part of their income, and who, by this act, will be obliged, however reluctantly, to part with a portion of those savings which they were anxious to lay up. It is the principal object of this bill, to get at this description of individuals. But I do not think that this resource is any thing like so considerable as gentlemen imagine. If we suppose that there are 3,000 persons who enjoy, at an average, 1,000*l.* each (which, in these luxurious times, will include, I am persuaded, all the misers in the kingdom), the total income they possess will not exceed 3,000,000*l. per annum*, and the tax will not produce above 300,000*l.*

Another description of persons, are those who formerly lived up to the full extent of their income, or, perhaps, beyond it, but who will now begin to save, and to reduce their establishments, in order to pay this new contribution. I am afraid this class will be a very numerous one, and that, to the full amount they are compelled to pay to this tax on income, we shall lose in the excise and customs, and other branches of the revenue.

The only remaining class consists of those who will continue to live as formerly. Perhaps, indeed, they cannot retrench, owing to the largeness of their family, their professional situations, and various other circumstances. Having neither saved the money before, nor being able to save it now, they must either deduct it from their capital (if they have any), or borrow it where they can find it.

And this leads me again to allude to the great disadvantage of blending the two systems together, namely, that of borrowing money for the public service, and of raising the supplies within the year. The consequence of a public loan is, that all the money of the kingdom not only flows into the metropolis, but also into the hands of a particular set of individuals who job in the funds. What follows? It is evident that any private person cannot borrow money almost on any terms. Whereas, if there were no loan, the circulating wealth of the kingdom would be spread over the whole surface of the country; the loan-mongers of London would be glad to lend their money on respectable private securities, and less difficulty would be found in raising the whole of the supplies within the year, than the proportion which it is proposed, by this bill, should be levied.

We shall suppose, however, that the nation is able to pay the proposed tax of 10 *per cent.* on income; yet, when I consider the various objections which may be urged against it, some of which go

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to the very root of the measure, and others, which, though they affect only particular branches of it, yet are almost of equal moment,—I can scarcely think that the House will be disposed to pass such a bill into a law.

The radical objections are three; namely, that the measure in question will promote emigration, will diminish the produce of the old taxes, and will raise the price of all the necessaries of life.

There is no circumstance so likely to be apprehended from this measure, as the emigration of the industrious classes of the community. If, in addition to all the usual taxes to which the people of the country are subjected, and which are in general reckoned tolerably oppressive, persons are also made liable to a compulsive disclosure of property, which has ever been accounted so odious and vexatious a measure, and also to have that property severely taxed, it must induce great multitudes of individuals to desert a country, where they are subjected to such grievous oppression, and to find out some quiet asylum, where they may escape such rapacity. If such a circumstance were to take place, and it is evidently not impossible, nor, in my opinion, improbable, it would be the source of infinite mischief to this country. If the ingenious mechanic, the industrious artisan, the adventurous manufacturer, the hardy seaman, the intelligent merchant, and the skilful husbandman, oppressed by financial exactions, are driven from this formerly happy island, what will become of the boastful power and opulence of the British nation? Some are already gone, and others are, perhaps, preparing to follow their footsteps. The passing of such a law as this, must confirm any resolution they have taken, and may banish for ever from this country, some of the most valuable subjects it can at present boast of.

Another material objection is, that it will occasion a very fatal reduction in the produce of the old taxes. Many luxurious gratifications, which furnish an ample revenue to the Exchequer, must be curtailed or abandoned. Many people are already considering, whether they ought, or ought not, to replenish their pipes and snuff-boxes, on which depends a branch of revenue (that on tobacco), yielding to the amount of 700,000*l. per annum*. Other articles must suffer in proportion. If the national income, as stated by the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), is one hundred millions, we pay about thirty millions of that sum to the Exchequer at present; for which some allowance ought to have been made in his statements; and if we are reduced to the private expenditure of sixty instead of seventy millions, there must be a considerable defalcation from the thirty millions formerly paid; and if the spirit of economy is once intro-

duced into the establishments of private families, which, I think, is likely to be the result of so violent a measure, that *cold economy* may continue; in which case we shall lose a permanent for a temporary advantage; and those taxes, on the produce of which depend the payment of our public creditors, and the subsistence of our fleets and armies, may become inadequate to the purpose. This is a point, in which many persons who now hear me, are deeply interested, who are thinking little at present how much they are personally concerned in these discussions.

A third radical objection is, the effect that this tax will have, in raising the price of all the necessaries of life; insomuch, that the middling and lower orders of the community will find it difficult to subsist under it. Several articles of general consumption, as salt, sugar, coals, &c. are already exorbitantly high, and must become still more so. Indeed, if we severely tax those who raise or produce the necessaries of life, and those who deal in them, it is evident, that they will endeavour to throw the load off their own shoulders, and will contrive to make the unfortunate consumer pay tenfold, for the taxes to which they themselves are subjected.

I shall now proceed to state some objections of a less important nature, because they are capable of being removed; but which, at the same time, unless they can be obviated, ought to prove fatal to the measure.

The first point I shall touch upon, under this head, relates to the taxing of the funds, which must alarm every one, attached to the old financial system and doctrines of this country, in opposition to the new political dogmas, which, in these days, are so boldly inculcated. By the laws, as they now stand, the interests or dividends paid to the public creditors, are protected against all charges and taxes whatsoever; but, for the first time, they are now introduced into the budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It is said, that there is no direct tax upon the funds; that we do not intercept the money, as it goes into the pocket of the creditor; but that we only put our hands into his pocket afterwards, and inform him, whether he consents or not, he must, at his peril, (the words of the precept of the Commissioners are, "thereof fail not at your peril") deliver over to us, a tenth part of that sum of money, which we assured him, when he lent the principal, was to be exempted from all taxes and charges whatsoever. What a miserable evasion! Indeed, if this principle of indirect and involuntary taxation is once admitted in regard to the funds, there is no saying to what height it may be carried. What is the remedy? The remedy is an easy one, and has been practised on all occasions, when

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the principle or the interest of the public creditor has been affected, let books be opened for receiving the names of all the creditors who assent to this new mode of holding their property, and let it go no farther than to the persons who subscribe. I trust that a very large majority of the creditors, if not the whole of them, would agree to the proposal, and voluntarily subject themselves to the new tax. At any rate, no consideration whatever ought, in my opinion, to induce this House to countenance any paltry evasion, by which its solemn faith, pledged to the public creditors, can, to the smallest possible extent, be violated.

The next point I wish to allude to, can also be remedied in the Committee on the bill. It relates to the idea of taxing persons residing in this country, for the property which they possess in other parts of His Majesty's dominions; for instance, in Ireland and the West Indies. This seems to me unjust in its principle; and, so far as my information reaches, without example in the financial history of this, or any other country. Both in Ireland and in the West Indies, there are separate legislatures, who enjoy the privilege of imposing taxes on the property of those who are subject to their respective jurisdiction;—a privilege which they exercise to a considerable extent. Taxing property in other places, by the authority of the British Parliament, is reviving the old and exploded doctrines, which laid the foundation of the unfortunate war with America. But, Sir, I doubt, first, the right, and, secondly, the policy of this measure. In regard to the right, taxes are described to be "*a portion which each subject contributes of his property, in order to secure the remainder.*" If this definition is a just one, and it is Judge Blackstone's, we have no right to take the produce of the property of Ireland, except to defend Ireland; nor the produce of the property of Jamaica, except to defend Jamaica. In regard to the impolicy of the attempt, it is, if possible, still clearer. The effect of imposing so heavy a burden upon persons residing here, with their property elsewhere, must be, not only to drive them out of this country, but also to prevent others from coming into it; in which case we shall not only lose the proposed exaction, but also the taxes which they pay in various other ways; and also, all the advantages we derive from the circulation of from five to six millions *per annum*.

The only other point I wish to touch upon at present, relates to the new inquisitorial power about to be established.

That some regulations are necessary, in order to prevent evasion, can hardly be questioned; but that they should be so very strict, or rather so boldly tyrannical, as those which are pointed out in this

bill, seems to me completely inadmissible. To tempt a man to perjury, and to subject him, at the same time, to an inquisitorial power, in order to make him condemn himself, is the height of cruelty and injustice. For my part, I think it infinitely preferable that we should lose some money, than run the risk of establishing principles abhorrent to that free constitution which this country has hitherto boasted of. This is a part of the subject, however, which will require to be discussed with peculiar anxiety in a future stage of our proceedings.

But, Sir, it may be said, that this is certainly a harsh measure, and liable to endless objections; at the same time, What can be done? Some great measure of finance is now essential for the public safety; and if you oppose this measure, you ought to suggest something else that may answer in its room.

I cannot possibly subscribe to that doctrine. No Member of the House is bound to do more, than to deliver his sentiments on public measures, as they are respectively brought forward. No private individual can have access to that minute information, without which it is impossible to judge whether a measure can be prejudicial to the public interest or otherwise. But if there is any doubt regarding the best mode of raising the supplies, let a select committee of the House be appointed for the investigation of that subject, armed with authority to send for persons, papers, and records. The House and the Public may be assured, if a proper select committee were appointed, that all the financial difficulties we are involved in would be removed; and surely, since we had out-of-door committees, gravely deliberating on the best mode of levying taxes, and who have favoured us with their public declarations on the subject of finance, there can hardly be any well-grounded objection to the measure I have suggested; and I hope, from the gestures of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), that he approves of, and will support the idea.

It will naturally be expected, that on such an occasion, I should again take the liberty of recommending to the attention of the House, that most valuable of all resources, I mean economy. We are told by a celebrated Statesman of antiquity, whose orations the right honourable gentleman has so frequently perused, and so closely imitates, I mean Cicero, "*optimum, & in privatis familiis, & in republica, vefligal est, parifimonium:*" and I am perfectly satisfied, there would be no difficulty, instead either of borrowing the sum in question, or raising it by means of an extraordinary and harsh contribution, to save a large proportion of it, by a rigorous

spirit of retrenchment in all our establishments, both of income and expenditure.

With a view of ascertaining the disposition of the House towards economical arrangements, I thought it adviseable to embrace the happy opportunity, which our late glorious naval successes had furnished, of suggesting a very moderate reduction in our favourite service of the navy; because I am fully persuaded that, if it could be introduced there, it would not be difficult to extend it afterwards to all our other establishments. I knew well it would be an unpopular suggestion, but I could not hesitate, from any apprehension of that sort, to recommend a measure which seemed to me so necessary and so useful to the Public; and which, if the war should continue much longer, must, sooner or later, be adopted.

Indeed, in my opinion, nothing could raise more the character of the nation abroad, or give more satisfaction to the people at home, than our enforcing a system of economy. It is well known, that in private life that individual is alone independent and respectable, who, without being too parsimonious, is yet attentive to his expenditure. The same is the case with nations. In regard to the people at home, the Minister may suppose, as they have submitted quietly to so many burdens, that they will continue patient under more: he may find himself mistaken. By a profuse expenditure of the public money he may secure the cry of those who are preying on the vitals of the Public, and, perhaps, for the moment, the assistance of corrupt and profligate men; but he will soon lose, what every wise Minister would prize above all other acquisitions, the satisfaction of his own mind, the confidence of a generous Sovereign, and the support of a great country.

I shall now, Sir, state some additional considerations to the House, which seem to me decisively hostile to the measure in question.

The first is, the great tendency that the passing of such a bill will have, towards perpetuating the war, and promoting public profusion. As soon as it is ascertained, that ten millions of additional revenue can be raised upon the Public, it will be considered as a fund for borrowing, and, at 5 *per cent.*, would pay the interest of two hundred millions of money. What a temptation to continue the war, when, perhaps, peace might be obtained on reasonable terms, and to carry it on with the most unbounded extravagance and profusion!

Besides, Sir, is it possible to imagine, if this tax is once imposed, that we shall ever get rid of it? Whilst the war continues, it is certain we cannot; and if peace were to be proclaimed to-morrow,

it is, at least, questionable, whether such an addition to the public revenue, would not be necessary, from the enormous peace establishment, which the circumstances of the times may occasion, at least in the opinion of those with whom cold economy is no particular favourite. And, indeed, if it should not be found necessary on account of our peace establishment, such an addition to the public revenue, will be extremely convenient to assist in discharging the national debt as a commutation for other taxes, or on some such similar pretence.

It is farther necessary to observe, that this bill lays a foundation for endless vexatious exactions. The Minister now very moderately requires only a tenth part of our income; but he establishes a principle, that the Government of this country is entitled to demand a certain part of the income of each individual, and is also entitled to enforce that compulsive requisition, by the strictest and harshest regulations. Formerly, Sir, our principal taxes, arising from consumption, and not extending to many of the real comforts and necessities of life, were in a manner voluntary. The Exchequer was enriched, and the people were happy; and the profusion of Government was fortunately checked by the conviction, that, if the taxes were carried beyond a certain length, the produce, instead of increasing, would diminish. But, Sir, if this bill passes, the whole property of the country will in future lie at the mercy of the Minister; and though he now proposes to exact but a tenth part, what is to hinder him, next year, from demanding a fifth, or even a third of our respective incomes?—Allow me to ask, how long it can be expected, that either the wealth or the industry of the people can hold out, under even the apprehension and terror of such exactions?

Such, Sir, are the objections which have occurred to me against this fatal measure; one, to which the attention of the House, and of the Public at large, cannot be too earnestly and anxiously directed. The only answer likely to be given to these objections, and, indeed, the only arguments that can be urged in support of the measure itself, are those philippics against the French Directory, with which the right honourable gentleman and his friends are accustomed to interlard their orations, and by which they endeavour to inflame the passions, and to perplex the understandings of a partial auditory. Permit me, however, to take the liberty of asking, What have such declamations to do with the present question? I detest the ambitious projects of the French Directory as much as that right honourable gentleman or his friends, and will go as great lengths to resist them. But because the French Directory are am-

bitious, must the people of England be oppressed, and must we, on that account, give way, and submit, even without a struggle, to such a mischievous project as the one now under consideration; a project, Sir, which could only have been occasioned by the most unbounded profusion, could only have originated in the harshest tyrannical principles, and must either terminate in the disgrace and ruin of the bold projector, or the destruction of the nation?

I have thus, Sir, stated at some length, but not longer than the importance of the question demands, my sentiments regarding it; and I earnestly intreat, that the Members of this House, divesting themselves of partiality for one individual, and of prejudice against others, will consider the subject itself dispassionately, as one on which depends the future happiness of this country. Let them resolve, instead of taking a measure of this moment blindly upon trust, because it happens to be introduced by a favourite Minister, let them resolve, on the present occasion, to see with their own eyes, to hear with their own ears, and to be directed by their own judgement. Let them be assured, if they suffer this bill to pass, that it will be an event, which they themselves will severely repent of, when it will unfortunately be too late, and which their posterity will have just cause to lament, as one of the greatest calamities that could possibly have befallen that country they were doomed to inherit. Let them also be assured, if such a bill as this meets with their approbation, that the British House of Commons will no longer be considered as that respectable Senate, whose conduct has formerly been looked up to, with admiration and respect, both in this country and on the continent of Europe; but that it will be accounted a degraded chamber of commerce and finance, calculated solely for the purpose of registering the edicts of a Minister, without knowledge of their contents, or conviction of their utility.

Mr. SIMEON said, the honourable Baronet was perfectly right in calling the attention of the House to this important measure; indeed all questions of finance were peculiarly within the province of that House. He approved also of the request of the honourable Baronet, to lay aside all prejudice. The single question, in the first place, was, whether or not, considering all circumstances, it was wise to raise a large sum of money within the year?—upon which he believed there was but little variety of opinion. The next point would be, whether it was wise to continue the assessed taxes, or adopt the present measure. Upon the funding system, it was not proper to say we should go as far as we could; that, he was convinced, we had not done yet, but we should stop in due sea-

son, and this measure said you must stop upon the funding system, not because you cannot go on, but because prudence advises you to stop here. He had not heard any gentleman say it was wise to continue the assessed taxes. He opposed those assessed taxes last year, because he thought the plan would not answer; but he was glad the measure had been tried, because it has had the effect of ripening the public mind for another measure which was now before the House. He could not agree with the honourable Baronet, with regard to a tax upon capital in real estate; because he thought it would be impossible to ascertain its value, or the value of the interest which each individual who enjoyed it had in that estate. The same objection would apply to some other species of capital;—as to capital in the Funds, the idea of taxing it was unjust in the highest degree, inasmuch as it might be the ruin of the holder, by compelling him to sell out to an immense disadvantage. The case was quite different upon income.

He then proceeded to take notice of hints that had been thrown out upon a former occasion, relative to the taking the property to be found in Corporation and Church Lands, for the use of the State. He hoped that would never be deliberately proposed in that House. Corporations were extremely useful for the purpose of administering local justice; and which they did administer as regularly, and as well, as it was administered in Westminster Hall; and he believed there was no complaint upon that subject in any part of the kingdom. As to the manner in which Corporations sometimes shewed their hospitality, he saw no reason to complain of it; to put men occasionally in good humour, appeared to him to be a harmless thing, and no reason why the property should be taken away. As to the Church Lands, he warned the House, but, indeed, it wanted no warning, of the effect of such a measure in another country; it led to anarchy and confusion; and so it would here; for the Clergy were the great prop of the State, by the influence they had upon the morals of the people; when that prop was taken away, the building must fall. But we should not be so unwise as to follow the example that was set to us. He believed, indeed, that religion was spreading over this country by the interposition of Divine Providence.

Gentlemen said that this measure was hard; he wished they would tell him what they meant by the word hardship—Suppose thirty millions were to be raised by a Loan, and taxes were to be imposed for the payment of the interest of the money, would not that appear to be hard? What was the hardship? It was not in the tax; it was in the cause of the tax—that cause was the war; and

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until we had peace, the hardship must continue. To obtain peace, we had done every thing that a great and dignified nation could consent to do. Indeed hardship was to be judged of by comparison. We thought our condition hard in England; would we change with Switzerland? Would we change with any other part of Europe? Would the London merchant change conditions with the merchant of Amsterdam? Why, then, talking of hardship, without taking it in a comparative view, was talking without sense.

He knew of no better way for discussing the policy of this measure than by looking at the effect it was likely to have on the price of the articles of life. Would they rise in proportion to the sum raised, which must be the case when a Loan was made? By no means:—he took it to be clearly otherwise; for, as it affected every individual alike, there was no chance of charging more upon any article of trade now than formerly; for each individual will be governed by prudence as far as regards himself; and that, from its very nature, will keep the prices of the articles of life where they are, or nearly so, the buyer and seller being affected by this plan actually alike.

As to the probability of emigration, he had not any of the apprehensions expressed by the honourable Baronet. In the first place, this plan affected no man whose income was under 60*l.* a year; and therefore it was not likely to affect the price of labour. If, indeed, the price of labour could be affected by the measure, there would be something to be apprehended from emigration; but a man, whose income was 200*l.* in this country, whether by trade or otherwise, was not very likely to emigrate. He should be glad to know of the honourable Baronet, where men were to go? Would they go to France? or would they cross the Atlantic? He believed very few persons of 200*l.* a year would try the speculation: each individual would consider he was as well off as his neighbour, and remain where he is, in hopes of better times, which must arrive when peace comes.

He professed himself an enemy to all species of declamation upon this subject. He thought that mischief might be produced by calling this an inquisitorial measure. Many honest people among the public, for want of opportunity of being better informed, associated ideas to words in a manner very different from the meaning of gentlemen who used certain words in that House. Thus, for instance, when the word "Inquisition" was uttered, a great part of the public annexed to it the idea of "Racks and Tortures." So again, when a surveyor was called a spy, the public annexed mean

and dishonest ideas to that office ; but, in fact, these were to be men, whose duty it was to be serviceable to the public ; and as well might the Attorney and Solicitor General be called spies, because they instituted informations against those who misconducted themselves. Indeed, he thought this an absolutely useful as well as necessary measure : and he believed it was approved in every corner of this country—Our enemies had made this measure necessary, for they had not left us in doubt what their object was ; it was avowedly the destruction of this country. That had evidently united us all ; it ought to unite us all.

As to the idea of the honourable Baronet in having a Committee of the House to consider of a better plan than the present, he had no doubt but that any Committee of that House would be a sensible Committee, especially if they had the honourable Baronet at their head ; but still he did not see why they should be wiser than the whole House. He then defended the particular provisions of the bill with regard to the mode of appointing Commissioners, and concluded with observing, that he thought the measure altogether a very good one, and that the opposition to it could only tend to damping the heart of the people.

Mr. MICHAEL ANGELO TAYLOR said, that if he thought this measure would produce all the advantages which his learned friend who had just spoken had said it would produce, he should be one of the first to approve of it. But as this was a measure which deeply affected the principles of the Constitution of England, he wished it to be gravely and candidly argued, and that no topics of declamation against the tyranny of France, or on the danger of French principles, had mingled in the discussion. If the measure was good, why not discuss it freely and fairly ? If bad, no declamation would alter, although for a moment it might support it. Perhaps some gentlemen might think that, although the measure might contain some provisions which ought not to be assented to, yet that it ought to go into a Committee that the defects might there be remedied ; but he was of opinion that he had objections to urge against the general spirit of the measure, which no Committee could remove.

He gave notice last session of Parliament, that he should early in this move for the repeal of the Assessed Taxes Bill ; but from the information he received from the Minister himself he found that to be unnecessary, since he was himself about to repeal that bill, and which indeed was proposed to be done by the present measure, which measure, however, he should have opposed sooner, but that he had been confined by illness. There was one thing which he could not

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help saying, although it had not an immediate bearing, in his view of the case, upon the present subject, yet it had in the view of the right honourable gentleman: that was, as the Minister had stated, there were many instances of the Assessed Taxes Bill being shamefully and scandalously evaded; and he wondered that people who lived under a free Government should behave so dishonestly, and come forward and swear to what was known to be false. He knew many instances of this himself. This he lamented as much as he held it to be criminal; for however he might oppose any measure while it was in that House, and that he had a right to do, nay, it was his duty so to do if he thought it a wrong measure; yet after it had received the sanction of the Legislature, he considered himself in conscience, as well as in duty, bound to obey it; a contrary doctrine tended to destroy all notions of obedience to law, and he saw no difference between defrauding the public of its property, and defrauding an individual, except that in the one case he was liable to be transported, and in the other he was only liable to a penalty. This doctrine he was convinced of, and he did not esteem it the less from having heard it maintained by a worthy man, the late Mr. John Lee. The evasion to which he alluded was the more glaring, as it was practised by those who pretended to be ready to give their last guinea for the support of the war; but when they came to be tried, so far were they from being willing to give the last guinea, that they did not wish to give the first.

But now, to come to the measure before the House—if the right honourable gentleman could satisfy him (and he hoped he was not very difficult to be satisfied) that this measure would be attended with none of the inconveniences he was going to state, he would certainly give him his vote; for he had no fixed hatred against the Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor had he any pistol in his pocket to shoot the Minister—a fate that was said to have befallen another great man lately in another part of the world, for attempting to raise a contribution among the people.

The first objection he had to urge against this measure was, that it would cause a general disclosure of property. It was indeed said, that the state of each individual's property should be kept a secret: but how was this secrecy to be kept up? Did not every man give his answer to the tax-gatherer at the door? Any person in the village in which a man lived might know the state of his property. How was this money collected? By the common tax-collector. Was it not childish to say that any secrecy could accompany such a proceeding? Secrecy, in such a case, was absolutely impossible. He was not able to say how such a measure as this would affect

merchants and manufacturers : they must judge for themselves, but it appeared to him to be a measure that would subject them to monstrous inconveniences. In some cases speculation was not only indulged, but constituted part of the wealth, or rather was the mean whereby a man procured wealth in certain situations in commerce. He really thought that this measure would affect a number of persons in this respect—It would affect the credit of many men. For instance, if a merchant paid ten per cent. on 10,000*l.* and it appeared that he lived in a very splendid stile, he owned that he should not like a bill of such a man for a large sum of money, because he knew that 10,000*l.* a year would not support very great splendour, and the merchant would have no means of concealing this ; nothing was more easy than for any one to know it. Again, to take the case of a private gentleman : was the House totally unacquainted with the case of some gentlemen of property, who, in the early part of their lives, had been imprudent, and had brought some incumbrances upon their estates ? Would such persons like that these things should be disclosed ? And yet such must be the case under the provisions of this bill. Many individuals might have expectations from rich relations, which expectations would be all disappointed, when the cautious person came to see the imprudence of the object of his intended bounty ; for rich persons in general were very averse to the idea of leaving their property to any but those whom they thought would take great care of it.

His learned friend had said, that the office of the person who was to make the inquiry into the income, was a respectable office, and that he might as well have called the Attorney and Solicitor General spies, as call this person a spy ; for his part, he expected his learned friend, the Solicitor General, to get up with great warmth, as being compared to such a character as one of these surveyors, as they were called ; for, by this the learned Solicitor was made to appear, as if he was one of the most contemptible men in the kingdom. But what similarity was there, in point of fact, between the Solicitor General and one of these spies—what did the Solicitor General know of the property of any individual ? His office was above any such contemptible inquiry. He caused men to be brought to justice who misconducted themselves, and his office was an honourable one ; he was led to say these things, because the office of these informers had been treated with too much dignity to-night. He knew how the case stood already, with regard to those who are employed by Government to examine into people's fortunes : they were employed by Government to look how far people are accurate in the payment of their taxes, and whether they are fairly assessed,

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or not. These persons go round at random, and surcharge, without caring what they do. The mischief of this was in many cases monstrous; for instance, he himself lived 160 miles from London; suppose, while he was in the country, he was unfairly surcharged in London; he should have no remedy, but by appeal before the Commissioners in London; the expence of his coming to town to obtain redress, would amount to more than the sum he was overcharged, and thus he must submit to be cheated, for he had no adequate remedy for the evil. If this bill ever went into a Committee (which he hoped it would not) he should have to propose a clause to remedy the evil of which he had been speaking, and to give costs to any party who shall be surcharged unfairly.

Another objection he had to this measure was of a constitutional nature. The genius of the Constitution of England was, that a man's property is sacred. It was upon the strength of that principle that every man's house was called his castle in this country: it was from that principle that the excise laws had always been held so odious in England. If excise laws were odious in this country, what was to be thought of the bill now before the House? An exciseman came to a man's dwelling to see whether he had taken into, or sent out of his house, some particular articles, without having previously paid a given sum to the revenue; but here a spy comes, not only into the house, but opens the cabinet or bureau of every man, and becomes acquainted with all his most secret concerns. A man must shew to this spy his bills, his notes, his bonds, and all his securities. This was monstrous, but the Minister seemed to take this as if there was to be a remedy for it; if there was, he should try to find it; at present he knew of none. He knew it would be said "There was no occasion to disclose, unless the party liked it;" but it was forgotten that the Commissioners, if a man did not disclose to their satisfaction, had power to charge him what they think right; and by the proceedings of a Court of Justice, if a man was called upon to produce his books, and did not produce them, every presumption was to be against him; so it would be in this case, because it could not be otherwise.

He knew that a tax on income had the appearance, upon a glance at it, of being an equal tax; but to try this for a moment, he would ask, what sort of equality there was between ten per cent. upon income merely, and ten per cent. upon that income which is the produce of a capital? For instance, let us suppose a gentleman of 6,000*l.* a year with two daughters, and that the estate goes away at his death to some other branch in favour of male issue, what does such a man do? he saves as much money as he can to provide for

his daughters at his death. Now suppose another person of the same income exactly, but whose estate devolves upon his children, what is the case with him? why, he may enjoy the whole of his estate during his whole life, and yet leave his children better provided than the other who saves half his income for his life, and yet these two persons being of the same income must pay the same money under this bill, viz. 600*l.* a year each.

There was another species of property which was of a peculiar nature, he meant that which belonged to a church establishment; and whatever he might wish to be settled, if we had to begin again, he could, from his conscience declare, he hoped in God, he should not wish to live to see any alterations made in the church. He was a friend to a church establishment; he was of opinion that the clergy were very serviceable to every community where they were known, for they instructed the mass of the people in their duty. He would ask any man, whether any person having a thousand a year in the church, ought to pay the same sum as a person of a thousand a year landed property? Besides this, he objected to the scale of duty. It was said, that men may reduce their expences, in order to enable them to pay this impost. A gentleman of only 1,000*l.* a year cannot reduce. He then read some calculations that were made by very able calculators, to shew the monstrous inequality of the scale, as it now stood in the bill, which, however, might be amended in the Committee, and the minister was welcome to these calculations, if he thought they could be of use to him. He then proceeded to state some more general objections to this measure. He considered a tax upon income as a tax upon industry, and such as would make men unwilling to labour. They would argue with themselves thus: why should we labour when government runs away with the effect of it? This was the great objection that had always been taken to tythes, and as far as it went, it was certainly unanswerable. From this one point, if there were none other against it, he was persuaded that this bill would become very unpopular. He did not wish to say much upon this bill now, because if it went into a Committee, frequent opportunities would occur to say more; but he did not see why he should have said less than he did; for he really thought the measure extremely dangerous, inasmuch as it would check the vigour and energy of the merchant and manufacturer. There was an author who had made great noise in the world (Mr. Paine,) who was prosecuted for his book, part of which was brought into his mind by the bill before the House. He quoted that author the more readily as he differed from him in the outline of his work, and therefore was the less partial to any thing he wrote.

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"We differ a little," said Mr. Taylor, "for he happens to like a Republic, and I detest it. He despises a church establishment, and I revere it. These works, however, I read by way of obtaining negative instruction. They shew me what I am to avoid." Here he read a passage from Mr. Paine's publication, the substance of which is, that Government always take to themselves all the produce of the industry of the people, under the head of revenue, &c. He said that this bill reminded him of that passage. He observed that if this bill was supposed to affect chiefly the rich gentlemen in the country, it was a mistake. It hurt not the rich man, it only made him retire from his former situation of splendour; and who suffered? not him, but hundreds of the industrious people who were employed and paid for their trouble in attending upon or working for that splendour. Better far would be a tax that was to be borne generally by all classes of people in the community. There was one thing more which he must beg leave to observe, in answer to his learned friend who had preceded him in this debate. It had been stated as if his honourable friend (Mr. Tierney) had said that corporations and church lands should be laid hold of for the state. His honourable friend had said no such thing. He had said that if any property was to be made a sacrifice, that might be sacrificed with the rest; but that he hoped none would be sacrificed. He should be glad to hear his honourable friend explain that matter. He concluded with observing that he had taken up more of the time of the House than perhaps he ought, but he was compelled to say the things he did because he felt them.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL said, the manner in which the honourable gentleman who had just sat down had spoken of him, called for his acknowledgement; but he could by no means concur in the arguments he had used against the bill. If, when the Legislature were compelled to impose a tax, they were to wait until they found one which was perfectly popular, he was afraid they would wait long enough: for all the observation which, from his situation, he had been led to make, induced him to believe that most people were inclined to evade the payment of taxes. He did not mean to say that all men would act in that manner, but he believed there were many men who seemed to have made it a kind of system to think there was no harm in evading the payment of public taxes, though they would on no account attempt to defraud a private creditor. The honourable gentleman and the honourable Baronet seemed to think that the principle of the measure they were then discussing, differed from that which was passed last year, viz. the assessed taxes. He conceived the honourable gentlemen were

mistaken in their opinion, for the principle of the two measures was the same, though the mode of carrying them into execution were different. And therefore, when it was proposed to repeal the Assessed-tax Bill, and to substitute this mode of collection, the principle was preserved, though the means were altered. A great deal of what had fallen from the honourable gentleman who spoke last, related principally to the effect this measure would have upon country gentlemen; but it appeared to him, that the honourable gentleman had not considered this subject with his usual accuracy. The question was not whether there should be a tax, but how a given sum of money was to be raised in a manner the most beneficial to the public, and least oppressive to individuals. The experience of last year had fully proved the wisdom of raising a considerable part of the supplies within the year. The honourable Baronet, who was so well read in the history of Finance, must know, that the novelty, was the introduction of the funding system, and not the raising the supplies within the year: he must be aware that formerly the supplies were always raised within the year. The system of borrowing and funding certainly afforded greater facilities, but still it ought not to be carried to too great an extent. It seemed to be just upon every principle, that we ought for a time to pay more than usual, rather than to throw the whole burden upon posterity. The propriety of adopting the principle of raising the supplies, or at least a considerable part of them, within the year, having been justified by experience, and having been so often approved of by the House, it was wholly unnecessary for him to say any more upon that part of the subject. The principle of the measure which was agreed to last year was this, that a tenth part of the income of every person should be contributed. The question that occurred when the principle was agreed to, was, How that tenth part was to be ascertained? It was imagined that the extent of a man's income might be ascertained by the amount of his taxes. It was on this supposition that the tax of last year was adopted, under the idea that it would produce one-tenth of the general income. Wherever the operation of the tax was such as to take more than one-tenth from any individual, then the bill pointed out the means by which he might obtain relief; wherever it took less than one-tenth, then it was so far defective. But in those cases, where the assessed taxes did not take one-tenth, then the individual had the means of making up the deficiency by voluntary contributions, and many persons had adopted that mode of paying the deficiency. Every person was not, however, quite so liberal; for he was sorry to say, that many men had taken very improper means to evade the payment of the tax.

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This circumstance led to a revision of the measure, and it became necessary to endeavour to find out some plan by which these inconveniences might be avoided, and the tax collected in a more equal way, that is to say, of finding out some means of ascertaining the tenth of every man's income, amounting to 200*l.* and upwards. He was perfectly aware that the plan which was then before the House, would not, in every individual instance, produce the tenth of a man's income. It was impossible to suggest any plan which would not, in some instances, be liable to evasion. But if they could not obtain perfect equality, they ought, at least, to adopt such measures as seemed the most likely to produce that effect. This was the object of the present bill, viz. to give effect to the principle of the measure of last year. With respect to that part of the bill which related to the gradations of income, the honourable gentleman's calculations seemed to be particularly inaccurate, and inapplicable. The object of the bill was to give relief to persons possessing incomes of less than 200*l.* a year, in proportion to their income; but the honourable gentleman seemed to think, that from 60*l.* up to 200*l.* per annum, a man ought to pay in the same proportion as he paid at 60*l.*, which would be extremely unjust.—The principle of the measure of last year had been approved of by the House, and had been sanctioned by experience, and he was confident the House would not now think right to alter their opinion.

The honourable Baronet had made some observations upon taxation of capital, and taxation of income, and seemed to be of opinion, that capital ought to be taxed as well as income. He was surprized to find that the honourable Baronet was an advocate for taxing capital, because it seemed to be an opinion almost universally agreed to, that income, and not capital, was the proper object of taxation. It was upon this principle that most of our taxes were founded. What were the land tax, the county rates, the rates for building bridges, the poor rates, &c. but taxes upon income. Taxes upon capital had been attempted, but it was found that they produced great inequality. In the beginning of the reign of Queen Anne, there was an attempt made to tax capital, by a measure which, except that it applied to capital as well as to income, was, in many respects, like the present one: the provisions of that act were infinitely more objectionable than those of the present measure; but it never was suggested at that period that they were unconstitutional. It certainly was found that they were not effectual, as far as they related to capital; but as far as they related to income, they proved to be effectual: the result was, that the tax, as far as it affected capital, was given up; but, with respect to income, it was

retained. It must be obvious to the House, that an attempt to tax capital, with respect to land, would be wholly impracticable. How would it be possible for commissioners to examine into the various kinds of estates and the different interests which different people might have in the land? How could they distinguish between settled and unsettled estates? If they were to tax the tenant for life according to his interest, then the reversioners would not be taxed at all. In many cases, those who least deserved it would be most favoured; and on the other hand, those who had the greatest title to indulgence would receive the least. A man who married a woman without a fortune, would be taxed in a greater degree than a man of the same fortune who married a lady of large fortune. It was therefore obvious, that to attempt to tax the capital of land would be, in the first place, nearly impracticable; or, if it could be effected, would be productive of the greatest inequalities. But if the principle of taxing capital was applied to money, the inequality would be much greater, because the value of money depended, in a very great degree, upon the mode in which it was employed. A sum of money in the hands of one man, might be infinitely more valuable than an equal sum in the hands of another. There were innumerable modes of employing money for the advantage of the owner; much depended upon the skill, the industry, and the perseverance of the person who employed it. But a tax upon capital would make no such distinctions; and two persons possessing the same sum, must pay the same tax, though the value of the capital might be five times greater to one than to the other. He did not mean to say that a tax upon income was, in every instance, free from these objections. He knew that it was not possible to devise any mode of taxation which should operate equally upon all. But he thought that a tax which would take, as nearly as possible, the same proportion of income from all, would be the most equal, and consequently the most desirable one that could be imposed. One great advantage arising from this mode of taxation was, that that which was raised came into the public coffer, and had not the effect of raising the price of any article of consumption. It was not a double tax, as many taxes which were laid upon articles of consumption certainly were. When a tax was laid upon any article, the seller of that article not only increased the price of that article according to the amount of the tax, but in general advanced it considerably upon the consumer. There certainly could be no mode of raising money more economically to the Public than the present, because the sum that was raised went immediately into the Public Treasury, and no more was raised for the advantage of individuals.

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Persons who had only life interests in estates felt a tax upon articles of consumption in a much greater degree than others, because they were articles which they could not in general dispense with : and therefore an argument which was very often used was not just, because though it might be said that a man's expenditure was voluntary, yet if he did lessen his expenditure to any great degree, he must not only do that which was stated as likely to be the consequence of the present bill, viz. descend from the rank he had been accustomed to hold in life, but he must also deprive himself of some of the comforts of life. Another objection to this measure was, that admitting the propriety of the principle of raising a part of the supplies within the year, still the means of carrying it into execution were objectionable. In the first place, he begged to observe, that with respect to any of the provisions of the bill, they were open to alteration in the Committee. If gentlemen would consider the subject with that coolness and deliberation which a subject of this importance deserved, they would find that it would be an extremely difficult task to discover other means by which the same beneficial effects could be produced with as little inconvenience. He wished to ask gentlemen to state fairly, what would be the result of this measure? The Commissioners who were to act under this bill had been described in the most invidious manner. Suppose for a moment that all the inhabitants of a parish were assembled for the purpose of laying a certain tax upon themselves, he wished to know whether the persons who were to act as Commissioners under this bill were not the persons who would be the most likely to be chosen to assess each man's proportion of the tax? He was very far from contending that the bill was perfect in all its parts, or that no modification ought to be adopted. But if it was admitted that it was necessary to raise a large part of the supplies within the year, and if the plan now proposed was the most efficacious and the cheapest mode of raising those supplies, then he conceived, that whatever objections gentlemen might have to particular regulations, they could not with any consistency oppose going into a Committee, in which their objections might be obviated. Another argument used against this bill was, that the people could not bear the tax ; but the experience of last year had proved that this observation was not correct, because under the operation of the Assessed-tax bill, it happened in a great many instances that country gentlemen paid a full tenth, and in some, more than a tenth of their income, and this they had not only done, but done with great cheerfulness. The effect of this bill would be so far from an oppressive measure to this class of persons, that it would be to a great degree a relief to

them in a great many instances. There were many who, as he had said before, by voluntary contribution, had taxed themselves up to the extent which the Assessed Taxes were intended to operate, viz. one-tenth. That a great many persons had found means to evade the payment of that tax, he was sorry to say he could not deny; and it was equally true, that those who had escaped were not in general the persons who were the least able to pay it. He spoke from his own observation when he said, that he had every reason to believe that that tax was in general paid without great inconvenience, even by those who, from their situation, he should have thought the least able to bear it; and it gave him great satisfaction to state, that many of those persons under this bill would not be called upon to pay so much. These were the grounds upon which he should support this bill. He had heard nothing from the gentlemen on the other side of the House which in any degree altered his opinion; he therefore should give his vote for the Speaker's leaving the chair.

Sir W. YOUNG rose to give his entire assent to the principle on which this mode of taxation was founded. In considering the propriety of agreeing to this, or any other mode of taxation, it was always necessary to bear in mind the nature of the contest in which we were at present engaged, and the important objects for which we were contending. It was a circumstance which contributed much to the happiness and prosperity of this country, that all the links in the chain of its society ran naturally the one into the other; that it was impossible to mark where one rank of society began, and where another ended, they were all so blended together; and it was upon this principle that he had found fault with the measure of last year, because there were many people wholly exempted from its operation. It was highly unjust to say, that one set of men shall pay a tax because their property is of a certain description, and another shall not. The most valuable property that man could have was enjoyed equally by all the subjects of this empire, and that was the advantage of the British Constitution, the protection of his property, his liberty, and every thing that was dear to him. It appeared to him, that the least valuable part of a man's property was that which he carried in his pocket: where, therefore, all were concerned, all should come within the reach of the tax. This was the effect of this tax, and therefore he should give it his most hearty assent; and unless those who opposed it would shew him very strong grounds indeed, he should not change his opinion. The honourable gentleman had stated, that in considering this bill they ought not to take into their view any extraneous circumstances, and that in that point of view the dangers of French principles had nothing to do with this discussion.

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This was a proposition to which he could by no means accede. It seemed to him the most obvious thing in the world, that when a man was called upon to pay money, he had not only a right to ask how he was to pay, but why he was to pay it; and surely a more satisfactory reason for paying money could not be given, than that it was to preserve the country from all the horrors which followed those principles. But it was urged, in opposition to this measure, that it would have been better to adhere to the funding system. Before this opinion was implicitly adopted, it should be recollected that we were a commercial people, and that great care should be taken that our wealth should not be diverted from our commerce, to which we owed all our greatness, into other channels. Now, the natural consequence of pushing the funding system to an extreme, would be to raise the interest of money to a degree that would be extremely dangerous, because if men could get an extravagant interest for money, without exposing it to the risks of commerce, they would be much inclined to lay out their money at interest, and thus all commercial enterprize would be checked. If then these inconveniences would arise from pushing the funding system to an extreme, it certainly was good policy to resort to another mode of raising money. But one of the strongest objections urged by an honourable Baronet against this measure was, that it would compel a disclosure of every man's private affairs. He was by no means inclined to consider this in the point of view in which it struck the honourable Baronet. In the West Indies, and in many parts of America, a man could not have a bond or note without its being registered, and consequently to a certain degree disclosing his property; and yet he did not know that it ever was considered as an inconvenience, or had ever produced any prejudicial effects.

He begged to take this opportunity for one, of returning his most sincere thanks to His Majesty's Ministers, for the great vigilance and attention they had shewn in the protection of the West-India Islands. The effect of that vigilance was, that those possessions now enjoyed all the benefits of the most profound tranquillity. He was also happy to say, that one of the islands which had been overrun by the enemy, was now in as prosperous a situation as if no such disastrous event had ever taken place. Another objection which had been pressed against this bill was, that it invested the persons who were to collect the tax with inquisitorial power; but this objection did not appear to him more valid than the others; because, if every man was allowed to give in a statement of his property just as he pleased, and no person to inquire into the accuracy of the statement, the consequence would very obviously be, that very little

money would be raised. If it was left to the honour of every man to tax himself, every profligate man would certainly pay nothing. He by no means saw how this inquiry could be so painful to a man's feelings. Who were the persons by whom the inquiry was to be made? Why just by that description of persons to whom every man voluntarily submitted the investigation of questions respecting his property and his life. If then they were persons of a character fit to be trusted with such important concerns as property and life, upon what ground could any man be afraid of being injured and oppressed by their prejudices. If he was inclined to suspect them capable of being actuated by prejudice, it would be by a prejudice on the other side, for it was more likely that they should feel a bias in favour of those among whom they lived, and with whom they were intimate, than for Government.

The fact was, that it was necessary to raise a very considerable tax, and to effect that object it was absolutely necessary to have recourse, to a certain extent, to coercive measures. If they did not adopt them, then they would leave the payment of the tax wholly in every man's choice, and the consequence would be very obvious. If then it was necessary to raise a large sum of money, and that coercive means were also necessary, then the only remaining question was, whether the means now proposed were not the best that could be suggested? If any gentleman could point out any body of men better calculated to inspect into this business, and less liable to be influenced by improper motives, he might propose it in the Committee. But as to the principle of the bill, it should have his entire support, because he was convinced that we had now arrived at the true principle of taxation, in which all persons were called upon to contribute in proportion to their means, at least as far as those means could be ascertained.

Mr. ELLISON said, that when the honourable gentleman opposite to him (Mr. Taylor) began his speech, he requested the House to drive from their recollection all that they heard about French principles, because they had nothing to do with this subject, which he contended ought to be decided upon its own merits, without a reference to any extraneous subjects. This was a request he could not comply with; nothing could efface these impressions from his mind. If the honourable gentleman had the tongue of Men and of Angels, he could not take from his mind, or from his heart, the impression that had been made upon them by the dreadful effects of French principles. He was happy to say, that it was not only the Members of that House, but their constituents, who had also felt the danger of those principles. They now felt unanimously

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what they owed to themselves, to their King, to their Country, and to posterity. He had heard the Majority of that House termed a *Liberticide Majority*, because, under the pressure of a most important crisis, they had taken strong and effectual measures for the ultimate security of genuine Liberty. They had succeeded in their efforts, and he now hoped the time was not far distant when they would in tranquillity enjoy the happy consequences of their efforts. The honourable gentleman said, that his objection was to the principle of the bill, which could not be cured in a Committee: he was surprised, after that declaration, to hear the honourable gentleman express his intention of attending the Committee. The principle of this measure appeared to him exactly the same as that of last year; but he liked the means now adopted for carrying that principle into effect infinitely better than the criterion of assessed taxes. He begged the House to recollect, that last year he had given his entire approbation to the principle, though he then expressed his opinion that the means of enforcing it would be found to be defective. He did not mean to say that the plan now proposed was absolutely perfect, and would operate with perfect equality in every instance; but he believed it reached as nearly to equality as possible. The reason why he so strongly supported this measure was, because it would effect that which he was anxious for, namely, that every man should pay alike, because every man was equally interested. They knew they were all Englishmen, and they knew how much they were interested in protecting their rights, and repelling the common enemy. Gentlemen had talked of this as a new and unheard-of measure, and that we ought to adhere to the funding system. He by no means considered this a new measure; and as to the funding system, it surely was right not to push it to an extreme, but to adopt other measures in time. He thought the Ministers of this country entitled to their thanks; they had met uncommon dangers with uncommon fortitude, by meeting dangers half way; they had got the vantage ground, and had saved the country. They had acted with wisdom and with vigour; they had not put off till to-morrow that which they could do to-day. He had witnessed the strong spirit displayed by all classes and descriptions of people; he had witnessed the gallantry of our sailors, and of every description of our forces; and he was led to hope we should soon arrive at the haven of peace, which we all so much desired. He admitted there were many things in this bill which might require some modification; but that was a subject fit only for the consideration of the Committee. He would not detain the House any longer, except merely to answer an observation which had fallen from an honourable gentle-

man on the other side of the House. The honourable gentleman had talked of this as a measure of requisition: what analogy there was between the tax and a requisition, he could not conceive. No Minister in this country would ever dare to attempt a requisition. But it seemed to him rather extraordinary, that a measure to which the people gave their assent by means of their representatives, could be for a moment compared with a lawless requisition.

Sir FRANCIS BARING did not rise to oppose the object of the bill—it called for the supplies which the exigencies of the state made it necessary to raise within the year, and to this he would not object; neither did he object to a similar plan proposed last year, and this conduct he was induced to adopt, not merely to provide for our temporary safety, but more particularly for the permanent preservation of our finances. He was not, however, without his objections to several parts of the plan—it was as liable to evasion, and even more so, than that of last year. He especially observed the tenor of the bill with respect to commercial objects, and there he was convinced it would be evaded, and frauds committed beyond any thing it was possible to conceive. A learned gentleman (the Solicitor General) had made some distinction between a tax upon income and a tax upon capital. With regard to that on income, he seemed to think there could be no evasion—in some measure the learned gentleman might be right; but with regard to trade, he most certainly was in the wrong, for in commerce the bill would be liable to evasions and frauds without end: there would be many who would try to evade, and those who could, most probably would. A man may have a large income in trade, yet his property cannot be ascertained; even could it be come at, there are occasions where it should not be touched. There was nothing that should have a stronger claim on the protection of Government, than creative talents in mercantile pursuits; here exertion should be anxiously fostered. Where industry is engaged in accumulating property, it should be encouraged, not cramped nor dispirited. The industrious and enterprising should be protected; at least he should not be molested while engaged in producing a capital—when it is produced, let it then be taxed; but while he is engaged in the pursuit, no surveyor, no inspector should pry into his affairs; but when he creates a capital, then it may be liable to taxation. Again, it is said to be proved in the bill, that when a merchant is examined upon oath, he is not to be obliged to produce his books. If, however, he is surcharged, can he avoid paying the surcharge unless he produces his books? Indeed, if the merchant is disposed to conceal his property, the Commissioners might puzzle themselves for

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six months, nay for twelve, and still not be able to come at his income. In every mercantile account or operation, when there is question of closing it, it generally receives the touch of the dissecting hand of the master. Some portion is put to profit—another to expenditure; but, under the operation of this bill, the dissecting hand of the master will not appear at all—there will be nothing carried to profit, and this may prove of serious consequence. But the manufacturing and trading part of the community will be able to evade the bill still more effectually: as their property is generally in stock, the manufacturers, &c. will be induced to undervalue it, and thus avoid the tax altogether. From what had passed at the Bank yesterday, he was induced to put the following question:—Are dividends liable to be taxed, or only the profits upon dividends? What then, in either case, is to become of the profits of corporate bodies? Indeed the difficulty in these cases amounts to an impossibility. The idea of this measure seems to have been borrowed from the Dutch. But to Holland it might occasion no injury; the disposition of the Dutch is far different from that of the people of this country; there the measure was not accompanied with an oath. Here, he was sorry to say, that a merchant, from the nature of his business, was often obliged to take more oaths in a week, than a Dutchman ever took in the whole course of his life. He did not say this by way of throwing any reflection upon the morality and integrity of our merchants, but merely to shew the many difficulties to which they were exposed. These were the grounds which made him dislike the measure, and augur ill for its success.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH complained of the innocent precipitation with which the Minister seemed to hurry a measure of such importance through the House. Only four or five days were to be allotted to the discussion of a subject in its nature so intricate and multifarious; but this was the least of his objections. Were it the object of the measure merely to raise ten millions within the year, as far as that was its object he was ready to agree to it with his honourable friend, the worthy Baronet, Sir Francis Baring. His objections did not lie against the sum; on the contrary, it had his far his approbation, and so far he thought it a wise plan. Thus if a bill was brought into Parliament for making all men wise and good, no person, he believed, would object to the principle of it, but if it was provided in the bill to hang every man whom a surveyor should please to think a knave, then it would be regarded as absurd and impracticable, as hanging every fifth man in order to render all men wise and good. But it is asserted, that the principle of the bill is the same as that of the assessed taxes last year; as far as it goes to

raise a certain portion of the supplies within the year, undoubtedly the principle is the same; as it relates, however to the criterion by which the means of contributing are to be ascertained, it differs widely from that of last year; the criterion established last year was a voluntary criterion; a man might think himself able to spend a certain sum of money, but his expenditure was at his option; but his income cannot be said to be voluntary criterion; over it he has no control. An honourable gentleman has said we should all put a hand to the plough, and free the bill from all its inconveniences; but he would ask that honourable gentleman whether, if he thought the bill unconstitutional, unjust, oppressive and cruel, he might also add fraudulent, would he then assist in forcing it on the House and the Nation? Such was his opinion of the bill; he could not therefore put a hand to the plough. He would also ask the supporters of the bill, upon what principle of political economy could they pronounce that measure to be wise, honest, politic and just, which would impose an equal tax upon indolence and industry? But this the present bill goes directly to do; if the contrary could be proved, his first and principal objection to the measure would be done away; if not, the objection to him was insuperable. One man, for instance, may draw a dividend from the funds of 500*l.* per annum, the whole of which he has acquired by the exertions of his industry; while the other enjoys the same sum without its ever having cost him any labour. This bill will affect both equally. Is not then industry confounded with indolence? for no inquiry is made how that sum has been procured. It is not asked whether the one be not a farmer, who has earned it by the sweat of his brow; or whether the other may not be a mere miscreant, who loads the earth with an useless incumbrance. One man may have 500*l.*, part in the three per cents. or part in an annuity on Exchequer bills, while another possesses a similar sum, the whole in landed property: he who possesses the land, may sell it at 30 years purchase; while the holder of the annuity may be able to sell it at only three years purchase: no difference, however, is to be made between the two cases. They are liable to the same assessment—what a flagrant injustice! Is it possible to enact a more fraudulent rule? He hoped, therefore, that the House would agree to some great essential alteration in this part of the bill, and not tamely permit the drone and the bee, the rich and the poor, to be thrown promiscuously together under the pressure of a cruel, oppressive, and indiscriminating tax. The inquiry of this measure would appear, perhaps, more strongly to the House, when shewn in the words of an able writer, whose name he had the honour to bear; for the authority of that author

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would doubtless have more weight, and was better known than his (Mr. Smith's) speeches. The opinion of that celebrated writer, Mr. Adam Smith, would, he trusted, bear him out in his first assertion, and he would recommend the careful perusal of him to every Member of the House before they gave their assent to the present measure. With respect to the objection I have urged, this valuable writer says:—"Capitation Taxes, if it is attempted to proportion them to the fortune or revenue of each contributor, become altogether arbitrary. The state of a man's fortune varies from day to day, and without an *inquisition* more *intolerable* than any tax, and renewed at least once every year, can only be guessed at—his assessments therefore must, in most cases, depend upon the good or bad humour of his assessors, and must therefore be altogether arbitrary and uncertain." This is his decided opinion throughout the whole. The next object he would touch upon are the profits arising from agriculture and trade, and this is evidently an object not directly taxable. The same author adduces a variety of reasons why it should not be taxed directly—for this profit, he says,

"Is the compensation, and in most cases it is no more than a very moderate compensation, for the risk and trouble of employing the stock. The employer must have this compensation, otherwise he cannot, consistently with his own interest, continue the employment."

Here therefore is industry to be recompensed, and not confounded with indolence. The author next proceeds to shew, that

"The quantity and value of the land which any man possesses can never be a secret, and can always be ascertained with great exactness. But the whole amount of the capital stock which he possesses is almost always a secret, and can scarce ever be ascertained with tolerable exactness. It is liable, besides, to almost continual variations. A year seldom passes away, frequently not a month, sometimes scarce a single day, in which it does not rise or fall, more or less. An inquisition into every man's private circumstances, and an inquisition which, in order to accommodate the tax to them, watched over all the fluctuations of his fortune, would be a source of such continual and endless vexation as no people could support."

England, however, seems doomed to support it—Though he could not well imagine that Englishmen would tamely submit to a system of taxation that discouraged industry, and favoured indolence, and which put a surveyor, or a spy, over every man's property. But it is said here there is no inquisitorial power because you may make a declaration—to what, however, does this declaration amount, according to the same author?—He says,

"In all countries a severe inquisition into the circumstances of private persons has been carefully avoided.

"At Hamburg every inhabitant is obliged to pay to the state, one-fourth per cent. of all that he possesses; and as the wealth of the people of Hamburg consists principally in stock, this tax may be considered as a tax upon stock. Every man assesses himself, and, in the presence of the magistrate, puts annually into the public coffer a certain sum of money, which he declares upon oath to be one-fourth per cent of all that he possesses, but without declaring what it amounts to, or being liable to any examination upon that subject."

The disclosure of circumstances, we are also told, is not to be dreaded. Yet hear Adam Smith:—

"Merchants engaged in the hazardous projects of trade, all tremble at the thoughts of being obliged at all times to expose the real state of their circumstances. The ruin of their credit and the miscarriage of their projects, they foresee, would too often be the consequence. A sober and parsimonious people, who are strangers to all such projects, do not feel that they have occasion for any such concealment."

Perhaps the people of England are this sober and parsimonious people: yet they may feel that they have occasion for this concealment, and that they should not have their property, and the sources from which it arises, exposed to the whim, caprice, or fancy of a Government surveyor—who even from idle curiosity, might be tempted to enter a banker or a merchant's House, and require to inspect his books.

Mr. Smith then proceeded to shew with what severity and caprice a surveyor might attempt to harass those whom he might suspect to be some of the incorrigible Jacobins: the case was not impossible; on the contrary, it was natural, the surveyors might often act so, in order to court the favour of their employers; besides, a surveyor might think it his interest to employ a vexatious activity in the performance of his calling, and make 400*l.* where at first he expected to get but 200*l.* Against these vexations he could see no security; for what was to be depended on but the probity or religious scruples of an inferior officer of the revenue? Mr. Smith, after reprobating many other abuses to which the provisions of the present bill might give rise, again expressed his earnest wish that a longer period than that of three or four days should be allowed for its examination and discussion, that the people might inquire, and know to what a system they were going to be subjected.

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Mr. Secretary DUNDAS declared, he was not a little surprized at the conduct of two gentlemen who had just spoken. Those two gentlemen in the very outset of their speeches conceded to, and approved of, the principle of the bill—they approved of the plan of raising the supplies within the year for the service of the year, after such a full and unqualified approbation, each set out, one after the other, in raising doubts and obstacles that, if really founded in fact, would render that principle nugatory. The honourable Baronet who had rose early in the debate confined his observations exclusively to the commercial part of the bill; it was not his wish to consume the time of the House in making observations on all that had fallen from that honourable Baronet on that and some other points immediately connected with it, he thought the Committee the proper stage for discussion; the only question then was, “ Shall we or shall we not go to a Committee?” where those provisions are remediable. He was truly sensible of the magnitude of the measure; it was his earnest wish to court information from every quarter, and he assured the honourable gentleman (Mr. Smith), that if the bill should go into a Committee, he would cordially unite with him in the adoption of every regulation that would carry up the provisions of the bill, so as to meet the principles of it; for he would assure the honourable gentleman (Mr. Smith) that this was the only object which he had in view. The honourable gentleman had expressed an entire approbation of the principles of the bill, because it was calculated to raise the supplies of the year within that space. Having thus united in the outset, he hoped that he and the honourable gentleman would travel as cordially to the end of it, on this fair and candid proposition, that if the regulations should be of such a nature as to carry the principle of the bill into full and fair effect, that he would join in lending his aid in the attainment of that important object. [Mr. Smith answered, I will.] With respect to the observations made by the gentlemen who seemed to indulge a disposition to arrest the progress of the bill, they would apply with the same force against all systems of taxation whatsoever—for instance, on sugar, or any other article of consumption. The true principle of taxation was, that a sum was to be raised on property, without any particular attention as to the manner in which that property was accumulated. It was not the practice in the imposition of taxes, or the distribution of them over the subjects, to enter into any distinction of men; it was not the practice to call this man by one name, and another man by another name, to point out one class as indolent, and a nuisance, because he happened to live on an estate, which had descended through a long line of ancestors, or purchased by

the industry of a more immediate person: nor yet to call another man active who was excited to that very activity by the hopes of placing himself or his children in the same situation. He was at a loss to know what good could result from such invidious distinctions, such as drones and bees. The honourable gentleman had not been less sparing of his epithets on those who were to be employed in the collection of the tax under this bill, if it passed into a law; it was neither liberal nor generous to involve any one body of men in a general proscription. But there was another class of men whom he really thought, if the honourable gentleman did not think entitled to praise, he might have passed over without invective; he meant the gentlemen who had stepped forward so patriotically at the Mansion-house; when the honourable Member mentioned this respectable support, he certainly did speak of their honour and uprightness, but he had not proceeded very far in this strain when he said, he supposed there were some scabby sheep amongst them. This certainly was not a very polite expression. Without entering into any detail of the bill, even as it stood, he would assure the House, that no one regulation should exist in the bill that would not be found necessary to a fair and moderate execution of it. It was in the detail of the bill that this desirable end could be accomplished, and he pledged himself, that if any gentleman could prove or shew any clause that was not essentially necessary for that purpose he would wipe them out of the bill. He could not sit down without adverting once more to the meeting at the Mansion-house; instead of scabby sheep, those who attended those resolutions were men of fair fame, and honourable character. He hoped that the honourable gentleman (Mr. Smith), would find himself disappointed in his expectation, and that the country would be able and willing to bear this bill, and that afterwards they would be able to resist the enemy, and from the patriotic spirit which pervaded the country, he felt himself justly entitled to indulge this pleasing hope, nay he would go farther and say, that the country was anxious and desirous of this bill, because the people were wise and sober enough to see that their safety was involved in the measure, that that safety was to be maintained, supplies were therefore cheerfully granted, and the enemy successfully resisted. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Smith), had been pleased to call the respectable body which met at the Mansion-house, Loan Mungers and Contractors. Was the honourable gentleman apprized of the spirit which had exhibited itself in the city which he had the honour to represent; the city of Glasgow had evinced the same laudable emulations, but this spirit was not confined to these two opulent cities, it had extended to Liverpool, and some of the

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first trading towns in the kingdom. Would the honourable gentleman then say that they were all contractors and loan jobbers in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Liverpool? The honourable gentleman had touched on a house in the city, he was sorry that circumstance was not touched on with more delicacy.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH explained. He said, his notice of the House which he had introduced in his speech was a matter of accident, and it had occurred in his mind as immediately applicable to the question which was then under consideration.

Mr. MARTIN approved of the principle of the bill, and expressed his hopes that it would be fully carried into effect.

Mr. Chancellor PITT spoke to the following effect:—
Sir, impressed as I am with the conviction, that the present is the most important which has ever occupied the attention of Parliament, and as some points have been thrown out and relied upon by gentlemen opposite to me, which did not exactly apply to the subject under discussion, but tending to excite prejudices in the public mind, I feel it my duty to notice them before we separate. They have, I must observe, in the course of their observations, taken upon themselves to object to others, that of which they have been guilty themselves. It is, however, some satisfaction to me, that I have no reason to think any gentleman objects to the principle of the bill, but the honourable Baronet who opened the debate. I have consequently to oppose, on that ground, but one solitary antagonist [a general laugh]; and I must say, that, however great that honourable gentleman's authority may be, and it unquestionably stands very high, he has not stated one single argument in support of his opposition. Other gentlemen, who are liberal enough to admit the propriety of adopting the principle of raising the supplies, or a considerable portion of them, within the year, feel themselves nevertheless at liberty to endeavour to shut the door against all farther investigation of the measure which in the outset meets their concurrence and approbation, and peremptorily and decidedly oppose the prosecution of a plan, which they admit to be necessary for the salvation of the country. This they attempt to do, not upon the grounds of its final impracticability, not upon arguments applying to the question, but by conjuring up every thing which their ingenuity could supply, or which they could ransack from their imaginations without advertent to what is contained in the bill. One honourable gentleman says, I agree to the principle of the bill; but if it goes to raise the supplies by a general tax, then I am no friend to the bill. A most valuable concession truly! The honourable gentleman will not tell me, if it be necessary to raise the supplies

within the year, that it should be objected to because recourse must be had for that purpose to a general tax. I will suppose that the sum of ten millions was to be raised by a sudden tax upon all articles of consumption, and it would follow, according to his mode of arguing, that not one of them could be free from the objection which he has suggested. For instance, in the case of all loans, the same description of taxes would be necessary, yet they could not be resorted to because they would be general. I wish clearly to understand the honourable gentleman. If he does admit that ten millions cannot be raised by a tax upon articles of consumption, then I contend that they cannot be raised any other way than by the general taxation of property; and in order to ascertain the capital of the country, the only proper criterion that offers itself is that of income. The measure proposed goes to affect, in a just and equal manner, the commerce of the country, all proprietors of land, all on whom the commerce and economy of the country depended, all those through whom the administration of justice took place, all to whom the protection of the poor attached, and all who formed the great and important links in the vast chain of society. It went effectually to do away that light, bending, flippant theory of the moment, which represented them as not affected in proportion to the share they had in the common interest and in the common danger. I will leave these considerations out of the question at present; but if I could give credit to what has been advanced by the honourable gentleman with respect to the situation of commercial men, I certainly would concur in opinion with him, though subjects of this nature will more properly be discussed in the Committee. The great dispute between him and me is, whether capital or income should be taxed; but he declares that he would be satisfied with a bill that taxes all in an equal manner. Yet that on which the whole of his catalogue of insuperable difficulties, on which his most material objection, on which his desponding hope that the people of this country will be able and willing to resist the operation of the bill rests, is the disclosure of income. When he objects to the disclosure of income, which he says is ruinous and unjust, does he mean to preclude all capital of men in trade? Does he mean it should be taken upon a loose declaration, after the manner of last year? Does he mean to propose other regulations more calculated to promote the great object in which we are at present engaged, and of which, as to the principle, he avows himself a supporter? If not, Sir, he means nominally to profess to raise the supplies within the year. But even when he is suddenly become a proselyte and a convert to the new zeal with which he is inspired for his country, he

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agrees to the principle, and objects to the measures necessary for carrying it into effect. I believe, Sir, it will not be denied, that some way must be devised and acted on to raise the supplies. The honourable gentleman has in his speech gone through a detailed, I beg leave to say, not an accurate view of the clauses: but I agree with my right honourable friend near me, that such a discussion is not in order. Though he might act in that way on the ground of argument, it could not be maintained that it was not a conduct disorderly and irrational to enter into a minute investigation of particulars in the present early stage of the business. If the bill did not appear complete in all its branches to the honourable gentlemen, he knew that the Committee was the proper place for him to propose his objections and alterations. I must therefore observe, that he has been incorrect in both points of view, with respect to the principle and the clauses; for admitting the first, it was unnecessary for him to discuss it; and objecting to the latter, this is not the time to argue them. The honourable gentleman talks highly of the good effects produced by him and his friends on the Assessed-tax Bill, when they honoured the House with their presence last session, during the amendments that were made in it. But let us see if the objections to this bill are such as to make it hopeless to have the principle of it, on which there is little difference of opinion, carried into effect. In the first place, there is one answer which will, I hope, diminish the despair with which he is so deeply impressed on the subject. He has, Sir, thought proper to introduce that very elegant and gentlemanly language by which he has given the name of spies to the surveyors—a language which whosoever uses, only strives to bring into discredit and disgrace those officers, without whom the public service must be totally at a stand. He has stated, that the surcharge was laid on by the surveyors, and his reasoning on that point is curious beyond example: for taking up what has been advanced by his honourable friend above him (Sir Francis Baring), that the space of six months would not be sufficient to understand the state of a merchant's books, he argues, that as a fair statement could not be obtained in that time, it would be impossible to make such a surcharge, and yet, notwithstanding the impossibility of it, the surcharge must actually take place. The fact is, that no surcharge is carried into effect by the surveyor, the observations of that officer are merely submitted to the judgement and decision of the commissioners, who may, as they think proper, after a full and impartial review of the circumstances of the case, reject or confirm the surcharge. The honourable gentleman has read much to the House, but he does not appear to have read the bill to any accurate end; for he declares, that pending the

appeal instituted by the surveyor, the tax may be levied. But I beg leave to ask, what tax? not all the tax, but the tax agreed to against which an appeal is made by the surveyor. If therefore the honourable gentleman comes forward with objections against provisions which he does not seem to understand, does not this shew at once the necessity of our going into a Committee on the bill? When I speak of the powers entrusted to the surveyors, and of the statements which they are authorized to make, I desire it may be clearly understood that they do not come properly before us now, and that they will be the subject of deliberate discussion in the Committee. But it is maintained by the honourable gentleman, that no evasions have taken place to defeat the operation of the Assessed-tax Bill which passed last session. He is peculiarly fortunate in the instances which have occurred to him with respect to the patriotism of his friends; but he has rated their zeal beyond the mark. It is rather singular that he has not taken the opportunity of extolling their liberality in subscribing to the voluntary contributions. The observations made by the friends of Government are, however, of a very different kind. His must have been a chosen circle, yet others were as large as the honourable gentleman's before the new lights broke in upon him. But notwithstanding the assertion, I must say, that great and notorious instances of the concealment of property have occurred, the check provided by the Legislature has been found insufficient to produce any adequate end; and the declarations which have been given in, have, on various occasions, eluded the expected operation of the act.

Let me now put the case with respect to the present bill, and ask, is not the check provided to enforce the general taxation of income as mild as the nature of circumstances will admit, and as consistent with the benefits and experience before us as can be devised by the wisdom of the Legislature? The duties of the surveyor are clearly defined, and must be perfectly understood. He is only empowered to bring forward, after the necessary inquiries, materials for the information of the commissioners, and they are bound to act according to their oath for the advantage of the public. With respect to the influence which, it is said, the surveyors possess at parochial and other meetings, I draw a conclusion directly opposite in their favour; for if they are supposed to possess any weight or influence with men of such high and established reputation as the commissioners, is not this a strong proof that their own characters are fair and honest? But, Sir, the honourable gentleman has another objection, and tells you, that the oath is not sufficient to enforce the collection of the tax; yet the surveyor is the only person bound by

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oath, as that taken by the party is altogether voluntary. And let me notice, that there is a little difference between the person acquitting himself of a task in which his own interest is materially involved, and another acting solely from views dictated by his duty. If we will not have recourse in all cases to the oath of the party, we must, at least, endeavour to obtain some particular statement of income; and the first step of the present bill gives, it is contended, power to the surveyors to search into records and books; and the honourable gentleman adds, into the accounts of all public companies. If he will be so kind as to look into the act, he will see that they only possess the power of inspecting those books which any others might exercise, and that they have no access to records or papers, but what every other person from curiosity, or any other motive, may claim.

This, Sir, is one of the objections to the bill, which is much misconceived and misrepresented; yet it is stated and urged as giving a power to ascertain the amount of all income, while it confers no more right to learn the amount of the quantity of 3 per cent. consols possessed by any merchant in London, than that which may be exercised by others already privileged. The leading proposition appears to be, that surveyors only are invested with the power of collecting information. If gentlemen are induced to give credit to that statement, I trust every objection arising from it will be completely obviated when I do not hesitate to say, that there is not the smallest ground for it in the bill. If gentlemen will take the trouble to refer to the clause, they will be convinced, that these officers, so far from being authorized to collect information, do not possess the power of putting a single question to the parties, or of inspecting any papers whatever, except public books for the information of the commissioners.

It must, Sir, occur to the mind of every person, that the checks proposed will become the subject of minute discussion in the Committee, and that they may be rendered milder by future modification and detail; but to oppose the present progress of it by advancing reasons that regularly belong to farther investigation, is neither orderly nor rational.

But, Sir, to return to what ought to be taken as the criterion of the tax without the establishment, of which the principle, which is allowed to be unexceptionable, cannot be effected, the gentlemen who oppose the measure have dwelt upon a great variety of objections to shew the inequality of a general tax upon income. I do not wish to pass over these objections, as they have originated from a comparison of different descriptions of persons and property; but

this singular fatality attaches to the honourable gentleman's statements with respect to these comparative views, that they apply directly in a contrary sense; and, I trust, I shall be able to prove in a satisfactory manner to the House, that even according to his own propositions, the clauses of the bill evidently go to correct the inequalities of which he complains, and which existed in the act of the last session. The honourable gentleman, arguing upon that head, sets out with stating the dreadful inequality between landed property and a life estate. He supposes a man possessed of 500l. a year arising from industry, and another enjoying 500l. a year from his paternal estate. They both pay 50l. or 1-10th of their incomes. Where then is the inequality complained of, since after having equally furnished to the exigencies of the public service, they have the same sum or 450l. left. In order to make out the validity of the objection, either one ought to have more or one less. This argument resembles more the new theory of property, of which the honourable gentleman does not appear to be cured more than of any thing else. If we did not tax all in the same proportion, we should leave some inequality, and if we were to proceed in conformity to the spirit of the objection, we should tax the landed man greatly, and the industrious lightly, against all the principles of sound reasoning, and all the experience which have occurred during a period of 4,000 years. But, Sir, let me ask, where is this inequality to be found? Is the activity of the mechanic, is the industry of the manufacturer of less importance or less comprehended in the general welfare of the country than the more permanent interest of the landed proprietor? Let us look more closely into this species of argument, and we shall find it still more defective than it seems to be on the first view. The honourable gentleman says distinctly and deliberately, that every degree of industry deserves the protection of the State. This is a position which no man will venture to contest, but applying to his own deductions, we shall find that virtue will be its own reward. We are naturally led to investigate the manner in which estates are acquired, and several strong cases may present themselves to our minds. One man may have 500l. which he has purchased by a capital of 15,000l. accumulated by activity and perseverance in trade, yet that capital, after the purchase, must remain unimproved by farther exertions, and he is content to receive 3 per cent. on it. Another obtains 5 per cent. for his money; and a third contrives, by speculation in commerce and diligence, to make 15 per cent. on a similar sum. If we take from them that proportion which is required by the bill, we leave them in a situation respectively conformable to their separate profits.

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I have now to consider what has fallen from an honourable gentleman opposite to me (Mr. M. A. Taylor). He talks in despondent language of the discouragement which industry must receive from the operation of the bill. But in what way is this discouragement to take place? What are his authorities? They appear, in this instance, to be derived from newspapers; and he asks, "is not this a tythe?" The difference, however, is material and obvious. This is a regulation on grounds which must put our fellow citizens in a more advantageous situation than ever. Another curious inference may be drawn from the observations made against the hardships incurred by persons possessed of life estates, of temporary ones, and of those who receive the rewards of laborious employments. It happens singularly enough that the public offices held under Government, uniting in their nature profits derived from labour and temporary estates, are included in the operation of the bill.

Now, Sir, these gentlemen who oppose it, have proposed on former occasions, as a great resource for the national expenditure, that all those offices should be made to contribute largely to the public service—I do not mean sinecures, for they wished to suppress them. The calculations furnished this night are not more exact than those of the honourable Baronet on that occasion; the references certainly were not those of the Board of Agriculture, [a general laugh]; but the honourable Baronet had made the prodigious discovery, that if all the public offices were placed on a reduced establishment, and others suppressed, that the sum of ten millions would be saved to the public. I was highly pleased with the project, and sincerely wished for the execution of it; but I was always unfortunately stopped in every attempt I made to go on with it, by finding that the entire expences of the public offices only amounted to one tenth of the prodigious saving which was so confidently held out. The honourable Baronet's attention has been taken up with agricultural studies and military tactics, or he might have known, that a Committee appointed for the express purpose, had made a very different calculation. But it so happened, that the object of the Committee, which continued for nearly two years, was either unknown to the honourable Baronet, or that the Committee did not think his attendance necessary, however instructive and profitable to the State it might have been. I only mention this in consequence of the public offices being comprehended in the operation of the bill. But the honourable gentlemen would have us not to lay a tax on income, but on the capital. I would wish to know by what means the amount of the capital or landed property could be estimated? Gentlemen, when they consider this subject, would do well to ascertain the

legal description of different estates: they will then see how great a difference there is in their value. A life-estate would sell for ten years purchase, and a fee-simple estate for thirty. Are we then to enter into such wise and unusual distinctions as to estimate the different taxes which must be paid out of these two descriptions of property, according to the sums they would sell for? On what principle can such a position be maintained? What is our object now, or what is it that we intend to do by the bill before the House? It is nothing more or less than that of raising a supply of ten millions within the year; and how is that to be raised, except from the general income of the year? Are you to raise it by laying a burden on the descendants of landed gentlemen? by laying a mortgage on their posterity? There seems, therefore, to be a total misconception of the tax; which is only a tax for the year: and a fee-simple of rate produces an income only by the year. But if it is admitted that the principle of this tax is just, you cannot maintain that there is any injustice in the mode it is intended to be laid on. If we shall have the courage to adopt it and carry it into effect in our own time, it will in other times, and in future emergencies, be always resorted to as a measure the most conducive to the general good of mankind; and so often as it shall recur, so often will the permanent property of any man be liable to the same taxation while the property still continues in possession of his descendants: the same family, therefore, may be said to lie under a continuation of this tax. But it will be very different with respect to a life-estate, out of which, after the decease of the present proprietor, a different person will have to pay the tax. Has not, therefore, a man possessing the perpetual interest of an estate, a right to set off the recurring charges upon his estate at any future period? Now as to the income which a man makes by his industry, and out of which he is to lay up a certain sum yearly, how can we make a distinction in this case? Whatever these inequalities may be, have we the means to correct them? We must take the situations of men as we have found them. No human legislation can regulate differently. The clear principle appears to me to be this: That one rule of privation applies equally to all that income, of whatever kind it may be, which any man receives within the year; and whatever a man is in the habit of saving, a portion of his income, or spending it all, he shall have one-tenth less to save—one-tenth less to spend in a year. Any other financial system which we may be called on to adopt, is beyond our depth, and may lead us into inconveniencies which we cannot now foresee; and instead of consulting the interests of individuals, you will only counteract those principles upon

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which their real prosperity is founded. There is one circumstance for which a provision is made in the bill; persons who are anxious to lay up a provision for their offspring, have no surer way of doing so than by making a small insurance, which is to be deducted from the tax on their income. This must at once annihilate all the arguments that have been urged on that head. It is my wish that this measure may be canvassed over again; for I am sure, that the oftener it is discussed, the more will gentlemen be impressed with the propriety and fairness of the plan as it now stands. I feel its importance so much, that I would not hazard an idea to which I have not given the fullest and most mature consideration. I shall just make an observation on what had been said concerning the supposed emigration to which this measure would give rise. There have been two kinds of emigration mentioned; that of people leaving the kingdom for the purpose of settling in a foreign country, and that of persons quitting their residence in the country to come and live in great towns. As to the first, our situation, thank God, is happily such, and such is unhappily the situation of other countries, that I do not believe it is the difference of 10, or even 20 per cent. that would induce any man to go away out of England for the purpose of settling in any other country. With respect to the second kind of emigration, which an honourable gentleman (Mr. M. A. Taylor) mentioned when he expressed his fears that persons would quit the country, and come and live in cities. I will leave the honourable gentleman to settle that point with his next neighbour (Sir John Sinclair), and shall make no other observation upon it, than that of reverting to what gentlemen on the other side seem to have forgotten. They forget, Sir, that when the bill of last year was introduced, all these dreadful consequences were then held out, just as they are now; and not one of the predictions of these gentlemen has been verified. There is part of the honourable gentleman's speech, on which, before I sit down, I must make an observation. He has, with a singular preservation of ingenuity, attempted to fix a most indecent and unwarranted imputation on a body of respectable gentlemen, who, from principles of the purest patriotism, have stood forth in aid of the public service, and to animate the whole country by their laudable example. Does he think, that when he assures us that the profits they may derive as loan contractors was the principal object which engrossed their attention? Does he think, I say, that their stake in the country, or their profits, arise out of the profits of the loans? If he does not, the whole of his observation was gratuitous, unfair, and uncandid. Yet these gentlemen, who are to derive so great a profit from loans, have

done that which will make the loans every future year ten millions less; they have been conspiring how they could diminish their future profits. As this was the object of their meeting, it was uncandid and unfair in the honourable gentleman to weaken by his cold suggestion, the effect which their example must have had through all the great trading towns of the kingdom.

The House then divided for the re-consideration of the bill—
For it, 183; Against it, 23. Majority, 160.

The following gentlemen voted against the re commitment of the bill:

Sir F. Baring,	G. Tierney,
Sir F. Burdett,	W. J. Denison,
J. Brogden,	C. Grey,
Sir J. Sinclair,	J. Jekyll,
B. Hobhouse,	W. Plumer,
E. Wigley,	J. Nicolls,
H. C. Combe,	W. Hussey,
C. C. Western,	Hon. St. A. St. John.
D. North,	
<i>Tellers</i> —W. Smith	M. A. Taylor.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, December 17.

Mr. HOBART presented from the House of Commons the bill for continuing the act of the last session, respecting the service of the British Militia in Ireland: and on the question for the second reading,

The Earl of RADNOR rose and expressed his unqualified disapprobation of the measure. His Lordship gave Ministers ample credit for the general tenour of their conduct; but of some particular measures he disapproved; among which, the present was decidedly one. His leading objection against the bill was, that it went *virtually* to dissolve the Compact originally entered into between the Country and the Militia Force—a measure of the kind was, he conceived, unprecedented in the legislative annals of the

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country. He objected also against the measure, as operating injuriously with respect to the discipline of the Militia; and one of the worst effects it obviously must have, would be the prevention of men of property from serving in the Militia. His Lordship then adverted to the hurried progress of the bill; and on this head he declared his opinion, that the worst bill which any Minister might be dishonest enough to carry through the Legislature—even a bill to subvert the Monarchy, and to substitute another governing power in its room, and rendered in forty-eight hours for the royal assent—may be called as good law as the bill in question, brought forward in the present manner.

The motion was then put, and the bill was ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, December 17.

On the order of the day for going into a Committee on the bill for imposing a tax upon income being read,

Mr TIERNEY wished to know, whether it was intended to go into the Committee on this measure to-night? He thought that the House should enter on it with their minds fresh and prepared. At present they had been occupied with a great number of clauses on the Land-tax Bill; and, for one at least, his mind was not sufficiently fresh and prepared to enter upon so important a discussion.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he could not think that the House was so exhausted with attention to a number of clauses, chiefly of mere form, as to be unfit for the discussion; and it was not yet half past seven o'clock. He did not think, after the full discussion the principle had undergone, that, on the question for the Speaker leaving the chair, it would be thought necessary to detain the House from the consideration of the detail. The Committee might now proceed as far as they found convenient.

Mr. TIERNEY knew the House might go into the Committee, and might sit till four o'clock in the morning, if they pleased; he only spoke of what he considered of general convenience.

Mr. BUXTON thought it was of importance that the measure should be immediately taken into consideration, as the Christmas holidays were at hand.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH said, he had considerable doubts whether he ought not again, on the present occasion, to bring the principle of the bill under discussion. He knew that such a proceeding was not exactly usual, though perfectly consistent with form. But he recollected too, that if to bring the principle again into consideration might be new and unusual, the measure itself was likewise new and unusual. If, however, it was intended to hurry on the bill through the House before Christmas holidays, he certainly should think himself justified in opposing all the forms of the House to such rapidity in a measure of such consequence. The forms of the House were intended to prevent improper rapidity. He did not mean to say that gentlemen on the other side wished any haste which they might consider improper; but at the same time, those who considered the haste proposed improper, could not be accused of acting from improper motives in endeavouring to prevent it. It seemed to be considered a ground for rapidity that the sentiments of the country were in favour of the measure. He did not know this to be the case. They certainly could not be acquainted with the details. The bill had been printed only a week, consequently the country could not have time to express any opinion as to its details, although they might approve of the principle of raising a part of the supplies within the year. He did not think that any bad consequences could arise from postponing the bill till after the holidays. It was not intended to take effect till the first of April; and even were the holidays to continue two months, there would be abundance of time to pass the bill, and to let it have its full effect.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that as the honourable gentleman had avowed his intention to oppose every obstacle in his power to the progress of the bill, this was a reason why those who were friendly to it should wish to bring it on immediately; he should therefore move that the Speaker do now leave the chair.

Mr. W. SMITH said, that certainly no man had a quicker intellect than the right honourable gentleman; he could not help being surprized to hear the right honourable gentleman mistake what he had said so soon after it had been uttered. He had said, that, if disposed, he should think himself justified, by the importance of this measure, in the peculiar circumstances of the case, in opposing every obstacle to prevent its being hurried on with what he must consider as improper haste. He might, for instance, in every stage, on every

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clause, divide this House, or speak so long as he was able. He did not say that he would do so. He knew too well what was owing to the House, and to his own character, to have recourse to such a mode of proceeding.

Mr. W. DUNDAS thought, that the explanation was not consistent with what the honourable gentleman had first said.

Mr. W. SMITH repeated his explanation.

On the question for the Speaker leaving the chair, the House divided :

Against it, 3 ; For it, 116. Majority, 113.

Mr. TIERNEY opposed the motion for postponing the preamble of the bill.

Lord HAWKESBURY contended that the preamble should be postponed as a matter of course.

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY had a variety of objections to the measure now under discussion, but he would at present content himself with putting it to the serious consideration of the Committee—1st, Whether it was a measure that could be adopted without considerable danger to the constitution? 2dly, Whether the attempt to enforce it was not an insult added to the injury that arose from it to the people of Great Britain? The principle of the measure adopted last year appeared to him to be far less objectionable ; and it was his opinion that it should not be thus precipitately abandoned, but that, on the contrary, it should be fully and fairly tried—it is difficult for any man to discover with accuracy what is the real amount of another man's property—it is only from appearances that he can succeed in drawing any thing like a probable conjecture ; and on this ground the bill of last year proceeded, and on this ground it proceeded properly, because it is optional with a man to make what appearance he pleases, or, in other words, to limit or increase his expenditure as he may think proper. But the nature of the present is altogether of a different complexion. It makes no inquiry into visible appearances: its obvious principle and final end is an assessment on his income, not upon his expenditure. He is called upon to declare the amount of that income ; and, if he does not rate it as high as the Commissioners may be pleased to rate it, he must produce his books, or other written documents, to prove the real amount of his property. No alternative is left him between either paying too much, or submitting to the disclosure of his private affairs. This was, in the mind of the honourable Baronet, an insurmountable difficulty, and he would earnestly deprecate attempting such strong measures—measures that must prove equally harassing to individuals, and dangerous to the Constitution. The

Assessed-tax bill of last year was calculated to produce seven millions and a half; it is now acknowledged it has brought in above four millions. From what this defalcation in that part of the revenue has arisen, no proof has been adduced. For his part he would again insist that the measure of the assessed taxes had not been fairly tried, nor for a sufficient length of time. Another circumstance he would allude to was, the voluntary contributions; under that denomination two millions have been paid in. This was a greater sum than they were expected to amount to, and more than six millions were raised by these two modes. There were therefore no very satisfactory reasons for thinking that the measure of the assessed taxes had been evaded to any considerable extent. All taxes, indeed, are evaded more or less; but the spirit that has manifested itself throughout the country of voluntarily coming forward with aids to Government is no small inducement to believe that the evasion of those taxes was not very considerable; besides the assessment of last year arose in many instances above a tenth per cent. it is not now proposed that it should be raised higher. Those whose dividends were above 60*l.* also contributed last year to the assessed taxes. There was consequently, in his opinion, no necessity of relinquishing the former plan, especially as upon the whole it appeared less unconstitutional than the measure now proposed in its room. Besides, the mode of carrying it into execution must be found intolerable and insulting to the pride and feelings of the country. Its principle plainly went to say that the people of England were not fit to be trusted, or consulted, with regard to any mode of taxation. Neither their heart, it seems, nor their understanding, was to be appealed to when they are called upon for money. Are whips and lashes then to be applied in order to extort it from them? Surely the adoption of such harsh and oppressive measures, argues ignorance of their temper and character. The amount of the voluntary contributions conveys a very different idea of their disposition, and abundantly proves that they should experience a very different treatment; they cannot but feel that while the present measure reflects so strongly and so unjustly upon their generosity, it also strikes deeply at the safety of the Constitution. In either light he would strenuously oppose it.

The Right Honourable D. RYDER stated, that nothing was more usual than the motion that had been made, and he was only surprized that there should be found any gentleman to oppose it; in all cases it was proposed to postpone the preamble of a bill, and nothing now was asked, but what was uniformly pursued on such occasions. The consideration of the preamble could not well be

gone into before the clauses had been duly examined, otherwise many of them might afterwards be found to be inconsistent with the preamble. He did not, however, mean to say that this observation was applicable to the present bill. As to the truth of the statement of the preamble, he thought it sufficiently grounded, as the preamble now stood, and whether the provisions of the bill had been evaded, or not, and precisely to what extent, it was now difficult to prove. The House had already before them all the information they could have on that subject, and it was generally acknowledged that several persons had not been assessed in a just proportion to their circumstances, which was enough to substantiate the latter part of the preamble. Before he sat down he had also to observe, that this was not the moment for discussing the principle of the bill, and especially he could not bear to hear it spoken of in terms so harsh and violent as those made use of by the honourable Baronet. There was nothing in the bill that could justify them; and they came with an extreme bad grace from a person who favoured the principle of raising a part of the supplies within the year, and who acknowledged the danger of the crisis in which the country was now involved. They were words so very violent, indeed, as should never be applied to any measure that had been suffered to be discussed even for a moment by that House. He would not say that such language was intentionally used as inflammatory, but neither could he forbear marking it with that censure which in his opinion it justly called for.

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY confessed that the words alluded to were strong ones; but he was also ready to prove that they were not stronger than what might be deservedly applied to several clauses of the bill. This he would prove when they came under discussion. He would also object to the power with which it was to arm the Executive Government; it might easily be carried to dangerous lengths, and these extremes, whoever wished well to the Constitution, should jealously guard against. The same jealousy directed us not to arm civil or criminal magistrates with too strong a power, which might be carried to lengths that would affect the innocent. The same caution was wisely observed when there was question of granting to magistrates the power of taking up reputed thieves. An equally vigilant caution should watch over plans of taxation; because a tax may have been evaded, is surely no reason why a power should be given to oppress a man who never had any intention to evade it, in order to enable Government to get at those who may have in reality evaded it. This would be arming the Executive Government with a very extraordinary and a very dangerous power:

but we are told the measure must be resorted to, because, by the failure of the former one, the revenue lost two millions. But two millions were well lost, in his opinion, sooner than we should lose the integrity of the Constitution. But he denied that the revenue could sustain any loss; on the contrary, it would gain more by placing more confidence in the good will and liberality of the people. By gentle means every thing may be had from them; by force, nothing. The character of the people should not be mistaken—if they are taken by the generous hold, there would be no end to their generosity: we should therefore be watchful to prevent their good disposition from being insulted and abused.

Mr. WIGLEY confessed that it was the usual practice of the House to postpone the preamble of most bills, but he did not see why that practice should be persisted in if the fact contained in the preamble was asserted to be false, which was the case on the present occasion.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS assured the Committee that he had never before heard a debate upon this stage of a bill, and it was his wish to close it in a fair manner. To postpone the preamble of a bill was surely as much a matter of course as almost any of the forms of the House; but to prevent the procrastination and delay of the business, which seemed to be the object of some gentlemen, he was willing to humour them in the present instance. He would, however, appeal to the feelings, to the honour, to the candor, and to the information of every gentleman who had a knowledge of the country, whether profiting by that information which they derived from their local situation, and putting their hand upon their hearts, they were not ready to agree that the assessed taxes had been shamefully evaded. They were consequently convinced that the preamble of the bill stated nothing but the truth; indeed, there could be scarcely found any one that entertained a doubt of it. On this he would move that the sense of the House be now taken, waving the usual custom of postponing the preamble.

Mr. LLOYD professed himself a firm friend to the present measure; and he had often, he said, heard the conduct of the right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Pitt) arraigned for not having brought forward a similar plan sooner, when every subject in the kingdom was ready and willing to contribute towards the exigencies of the State. He would beg his pardon; but he must say that the right honourable gentleman had hitherto been mistaken in his plan, for the plan the country wished for was one that should tax all equally. The plan of last year did not answer their wishes in that respect; the present one does, for all descriptions are desirous to see the taxes

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fall equally upon all—industry had hitherto been heavily taxed, while those who possessed immense sums from mortgages, and in the funds, were left untouched, and without ever having been called upon to bring in their mite towards the public exigencies of their country. He hoped every gentleman would attest that this was the general wish of the nation. He felt it his duty to do so, and that duty he was ready to perform.

The question was then put, that the preamble do stand part of the bill.

Mr. TIERNEY objected to the preamble's standing part of the bill: he agreed with an honourable gentleman, that harsh words should not be used—harsh words were always impolitic; but words which were applicable to the measure, which described it, and by which it would be recognised and known, were surely proper to be used. Now in his mind the preamble was a direct and gross charge upon all the gentry of England, and if the honourable gentleman complains of harsh words, he will find them in the text of his preamble. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) says let every man lay his hand upon his heart, and say, whether he does not know that the assessed taxes were evaded. Let us first know what he means by evasion. If he means that under this tax, gentlemen kept fewer horses, fewer carriages, fewer houses, and abridged the luxuries in which they formerly indulged, and if he calls this evasion, they may have evaded; but was not this diminution of luxury rendered necessary by the circumstances of the times? If the accumulated weight of the burdens of the war had obliged men to retrench, was this to be called evasion? Mr. Tierney had not in his own instance, kept a horse less, but was there any blame imputable to the man who had from prudence or from necessity lessened his expence? For all evasions which could be conceived, this new bill had provided remedies, and surely there was no argument for setting out with a harsh imputation on the nobility and gentry of England; the words could admit of no other construction. When gentlemen swore off on the score of income from the assessed taxes, to call this evasion was to say that they had been guilty of direct, wilful and gross perjury. But he would now beg leave to ask, at what particular period, and under what circumstances was it that the country was to be thus branded as not being fit to be trusted upon their oath? Was it not after the right honourable gentleman had estimated the rental of the nation at one hundred millions sterling, and after the sum raised for the exigencies of the last year had amounted to 30 millions? Was it not then after the country has willingly given one third of their property for the public service?

It was, therefore, peculiarly hard, when new taxes were now to be raised, that they should not be called for in more decent terms. It was doubtless still harder to be subjected to the imputation of perjury, without any means of getting rid of the imputation, for should a man be supposed by the surveyors to have under-rated his income, what means has he of proving that he has not incurred this foul imputation? Against so monstrous a plan he must raise his voice in behalf of the people of England, whom he could not patiently see thus taxed, not only in pocket, but in character.

After a few words from Mr. W. Smith and Mr. Ellifson the preamble was agreed to.

Lord HAWKESBURY said the words in the preamble "sundry instances" did not justify the assertion, that it was a charge of fraud and evasion against the great mass of the people of England, in which light the honourable gentleman had represented it.

Mr. JONES thought the preamble only reflected upon the "sundry instances," and did not affect the great mass of the people.

He, therefore, did not object to the preamble, though he admitted there were several clauses in the bill of an unconstitutional and inquisitorial nature, to which he could not assent.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH perfectly agreed with Mr. Tierney, that if there were only a few instances of evasion, they could form no sufficient ground for a new legislative act, as would be the case had the defalcation been to a great amount. But by the modifications introduced into the assented taxes bill, the estimate was reduced to 4,500,000l. and it was stated that it had produced 4,000,000l. so that in fact the deficit was only one ninth, a variation not more considerable than had been often found in the right honourable gentleman's estimates and calculations.

Mr. ELLISON conceived the proposed delay frivolous; that the preamble recited the real fact, and ought immediately to be read.

Mr. W. SMITH censured the last gentleman for applying such a term as frivolous to the debate upon a question which he considered as highly important.

On the question being put, it was carried in the affirmative, that the preamble should be read and stand part of the bill.

When the first clause was read,

Mr. TIERNEY said, he should oppose this clause, because he considered it as a great breach of faith, inasmuch as it repealed the assented taxes, which were pledged to a certain extent to pay off the loan of fifteen millions, raised for the service of last year. Those who lent their money in that loan did it upon the faith that it

would be paid off in a given time, by the operation of the assessed taxes. But they were now to be told that Government did not choose to keep their word. This appeared to him to be a violation of the terms which had been agreed upon. It was no answer to say to those who have lent their money, we have done you no injury; that was a point he did not feel himself bound to argue; it was sufficient for him to state, that Government had not kept their faith with the public. He really felt a serious difficulty upon this subject, and he wished the right honourable gentleman would satisfy his doubts upon it.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he was happy to have it in his power to relieve the honourable gentleman from any difficulties he might feel upon this subject. In the first place, if there was in reality any foundation for this objection, it could not apply to this clause, because it merely repealed the assessed taxes, and imposed other duties in their room, which other duties the House had undoubtedly the right of disposing in any manner they pleased. Parliament might, if it pleased, apply the duties to be raised under the present bill to the same purpose as the assessed taxes, which would have the effect of doing that in one year which would otherwise be done in two or three. But it was said there was a breach of faith: he wished to know with whom? There was no agreement of any kind with the persons with whom the loan was contracted as to the period at which it was to be paid off. The system adopted last year, of appropriating the amount of the assessed taxes to the payment of the loan in a given period, was not the result of any contract whatever with those who advanced their money on the loan. But it surely could not be considered as breach of faith with them, if by the application of a much larger sum, the debt was paid off in a much shorter time. Whatever alteration, therefore, was made in their situation, was evidently much to their advantage. The produce of the assessed taxes were applicable in the same manner as the sinking fund, and the one per cent. upon all the loans which were now made.

Mr. Tierney and Mr. Chancellor Pitt severally explained.

The clause was then agreed to.

The second clause being read,

Mr. WIGLEY objected to it on the ground that it affected all property in an equal manner. If this was merely a tax for one year, he should not have felt himself bound to object to it in so strong a manner, but as he supposed it would be of much longer duration, he should trouble the Committee shortly with stating the grounds upon which he should object to it.

The great objection he had to it was, that it made no distinction between the different degrees of property, but made a man who was only a tenant for life pay as much as a man who was possessed of an estate in fee simple. It made a man who had only a short annuity contribute equally with a man who had the most beneficial landed estate. There were innumerable cases he might put, to shew the great inequality of this tax. Suppose a man had a beneficial lease which was to expire in one year, why he would pay as much for that one year, which was in fact his capital, as the man with a fee-simple would for that which was his income.

But the right honourable gentleman had, upon a former occasion stated, that in these cases a man might insure his life, which would put him in the same situation with a man who had a more beneficial interest. There were a great variety of cases in which a man could not insure himself; for instance, a professional man—how could he insure himself in the continuance of his present income? There were many circumstances which might render him incapable of providing in the same manner for his family. Professional emolument depended upon a man's health, and often upon popular opinion, which could not be insured. A man who was in trade was in the same situation. The only way, in his opinion, to remedy this inequality, where insurance was possible, would be to deduct the insurance out of the tax, and this would in some degree put the person who had only a temporary income upon a footing with a man who had a permanent estate. He should therefore, move, in clause two, which runs as follows, to leave out the words in italics, and instead of the words, "Whether any such income as *aforesaid*," the word "which" should be inserted:

"And during the term hereinafter mentioned, there shall be raised, levied, collected, and paid annually unto and for the use of His Majesty, his heirs or successors, throughout the kingdom of Great Britain, upon all income arising from property in Great Britain belonging to any of His Majesty's subjects, although not resident in Great Britain, and upon all income of every person residing in Great Britain, and of every body politic or corporate, or company, fraternity, or society of persons (whether corporate or not corporate) in Great Britain, *whether any such income as aforesaid* [which] shall arise from lands, tenements, or hereditaments, wheresoever the same shall be situate, in Great Britain or elsewhere, or from any kind of personal property, or other property *whatever*, or from any profession, office, employment, trade, or vocation, the several rates and duties following."

Mr. C. to trouble had before to confid had been would c was four whether approbat within t within t from fun they we raised. with ge any othe a tax u whether raised i course t supplies posterity might t measure the year this he said, th a man that up for such more n benefic tion to the cor and fo empt h life est and th estate c cording If the his son paid si

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he should not have occasion long to trouble the Committee upon this subject, as it was one which he had before discussed at some length. He wished gentlemen seriously to consider before they gave their support to the amendment which had been moved, because if they agreed to that amendment, they would destroy the very fundamental principle on which that bill was founded. Before he proceeded any farther, he wished to know whether he was correct in supposing that the House had given their approbation to the principle of raising a large part of the supplies within the year. If then they were to raise a part of the supplies within the year, it must obviously mean that they were to be raised from funds existing within the year, and that in raising the money they were to consider only the year in which the supply was to be raised. This was a plain and uniform proposition, and consistent with general policy. If they were to attempt to raise the tax upon any other principle, it would no longer be a tax upon income, but a tax upon capital. There was no distinction in point of fact, whether Government raised the money by a loan, or whether they raised it by a tax upon individuals, compelling them to have recourse to individual loans. In either case they were not raising the supplies within the year, because they were imposing burdens upon posterity, and rendering them less able to sustain the burdens which might then be necessary. This was not the principle of the present measure, it was to raise the supplies, or a large part of them, within the year, and consequently from funds existing within the year; this he avowed was the policy of the present measure. But it was said, that a man who had a permanent estate ought to pay more than a man who had only a temporary or life estate. He contended, that upon the principle he had laid down, there was no foundation for such an argument, because a man of a permanent estate had no more means of paying out of his income than a man who had a less beneficial estate. If they were to make a man pay a greater proportion to this tax because he had a permanent estate, what would be the consequence? Why, that he would pay at once for the present and for the future; but by paying for the future it would not exempt his posterity, for they must also pay. Suppose a man had a life estate of 1,000*l.* a year, and that he died at the end of the year, and the estate went to a stranger? Suppose another man had an estate of the same amount in fee-simple, and that he was to pay, according to gentlemen's calculations, three times as much as another. If the latter died at the end of the year, and the estate descended to his son, the consequence would be, that the latter estate would have paid six times as much as the other. The more this measure was

likely to recur from the general conviction of its being highly beneficial to the public, the stronger this argument was.

With respect to what had been said respecting insurance, he begged to say a word or two. He never said that a man possessing a less beneficial income must insure himself, in order to put himself upon an equality with a man who had a more permanent one; because upon the principle he had just laid down, viz. of their both paying out of their income, their situations would be equal; but he alluded to the possibility of insurance, in answer to some arguments which had been urged on the ground of individual hardship. A man who from his income was able to lay up a large sum annually, certainly was not entitled to the compassion of the Committee. An honourable Baronet had, a few nights ago, stated the number of this class of persons to be 3,000, but upon what data he had founded his calculations he had not informed the House. But certainly those persons whose income was barely sufficient to maintain their families, could not take a cheaper mode of providing for them, than by insuring their lives. Another case, however, was put, as being a still stronger one, viz. that of a person who had laid out his money in the purchase of short annuities. He could hardly suppose the case of a man investing the whole of his property in short annuities, and reserving no provision for the remainder of his life after the termination of these annuities. He could hardly, he said, believe that a man would choose to be rich for a short period of his life, with the certainty of beggary for the remainder of it: but even in that case, he might insure his annuity. He, however, saw no reason why a person who chose to live like a rich man, should not contribute like a rich man.

With respect to the various interests which men might have in landed estates, he would defy all the lawyers in England to define them with precision, and he would defy all the calculators in England (if they could understand the definitions of the lawyers) to calculate their different value. Under these grounds he should give the amendment of the learned gentleman his most decided negative.

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON had no opposition to offer to the principle of the bill; the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that it was not a measure of duty upon capital, or, in other words, upon property, but upon income. The principle of the bill, however, was departed from in some particulars; he meant this observation to apply to Short Annuities. He did not, however, oppose any part of the bill, but he must express a hope that it might undergo some modifications. He had conferred with his con-

stituents, and he was happy in being able to inform the Committee, that his constituents had no objection whatever to contribute from their mercantile income to the service of the State, although they felt, that by this measure they were taxed double the proportion they could have been called upon in any other mode of taxation; or rather, they paid double to that which persons living upon an income which was not the produce of their industry paid. There were some parts of the measure which he thought rather unconstitutional—he meant the mode of enforcing the act—but this and some other points he hoped would be modified.

Mr. DENT said it was a tax not only on income, but on property also, and was calculated to create very invidious distinctions with respect to the funds; for no man, after it passed, would wish to be a holder of short annuities.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL said, if there was a distinction made with respect to short annuities, it would equally apply to every other species of income not permanent, and the adoption of it would necessarily bring this measure, instead of being a tax on income, to be a tax on capital. The distinction attempted to be made between estates in fee-simple and for life, could be only productive of effects wholly prejudicial to and destructive of the measure. The principle on which all taxes had been founded was that of taxing income. Where attempts had been made to tax capital, they had always failed. The original land tax of 4s. in the pound was a tax on the landed income of the country. It was a fifth of the landed income, not only of the tenant in fee-simple, but of the tenant for life: no distinction had ever been made between them, nor had he ever heard any objection made to placing them on the same footing; the reason was, it was acknowledged as the ordinary principle of taxation. He conceived what was now proposed as an amendment, a departure from the principle of the bill, inasmuch as it sought to convert a tax on income into a tax on property.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL expressed himself surprized at the amendment. That in a tax upon income, there should occur a vast number of difficulties, was obvious; that in a tax on capital, there should occur a vast number of difficulties, was obvious; but the circumstance which more particularly surprized him with regard to the amendment was, that it was not a substitution of a tax on capital, in lieu of a tax on income, but a tax on a part of a capital subject to more inconveniences than even a general tax. It had, he confessed, struck him forcibly at first, that an equal tax on a tenant in fee-simple, and a tenant for life, whose estate was limited, was unjust; but when he reflected on the various modifi-

cations of property, and the limitations of which estates were susceptible, he was persuaded that a different system would, with respect to the tenant in fee-simple, be injurious, and with regard to the tenant for life, inapplicable. He hoped the honourable gentleman would excuse him for saying, that he considered his first opinion upon the subject the most ignorant proposition his mind had ever adopted. Were the tenant for life to be taxed in a less proportion, according to his income, than the tenant in fee, the consequence might be, that the former, who might be without any family, and whose estate was limited to a stranger, would pay comparatively trifling to what would be paid by the tenant in fee-simple, with, perhaps, a large family. Besides, those who wished to introduce such a distinction did not seem to be aware of such things as beneficial leases for nine hundred and ninety-nine years, at a pepper-corn rent; they were not aware of executors' devises; they had forgot there were in the law what were called contingencies and double contingencies, terms which the Committee could not understand, nor he explain, unless he had brought his law books down with him. The difference stated to exist with respect to the income of a man who had 300*l.* a year in short annuities, and one who had 300*l.* a year on a perpetuity, seemed to him very extraordinary; it brought the argument entirely to this point, whether they would have a tax on income or capital? He had the same difficulty in perceiving the necessity for such a distinction, as he had in answering a person who once applied to him for legal advice, stating, that an estate for life had been left him during life, but not to commence till after the death of the widow of the person who left the estate. She was, at the time of the death of the testator, forty; and when the tenant for life came to ask advice, she was ninety. He complained heavily of the hardship of being kept so long out of possession, and asked if there was any equity? He next proceeded to state, that personal estate was subject to such infinite diversity and modifications as brought it within the same rule as that respecting estates for life. Upon the whole, he was of opinion, that attending to the nature of landed estates, either in fee or for life, personal estate and income, the tax was so general, that if it were desirable at all, no relief could be given without destroying the very principle of it. He then referred to what Mr. Alderman Luthington had observed. He said, what the Alderman had stated was an honour to a commercial country. For himself, he was proud to have it in his power to assert, that the public mind had at last become satisfied the exertions of the House of Commons had secured public happiness by securing the Constitution. He happened to hold his high

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office in times peculiarly troublesome ; but he believed no one had ever held it in times arduous as the present, who had been able to state to a Jury what he had lately stated upon a public occasion ; nor did he believe there was a country in the world where a person, situated as he was, would have been able to have stated as much after such a struggle as we had been engaged in. The great blessing of the country was, that the people felt their independence, and were sensible the laws afforded them shelter, and shed over them a kind of fostering influence, which, in gratitude, demanded their support in favour of that Government and Constitution by which they were supported. He agreed with the worthy Alderman, that a bill operating in so increased a proportion as this would, ought to be as little oppressive as possible. He was well persuaded that, in the profession to which he had the honour to belong, a great many would pay more than double what the established principles of taxation had ever called on them to pay. He could not express his sentiments of that high profession, to which he owed every thing, without reverence and esteem ; and sure he was all belonging to it would be ready to contribute to their utmost in support of the Law and the Constitution. For himself, he repeated, he owed every thing to the fostering principles of the Constitution ; and for its support and defence, he was ready and desirous of making every sacrifice in his power.

Mr. TIERNEY was satisfied he could in no better way shew his zeal towards his country, than by endeavouring to make men contented with it ; and it was because the present measure was calculated to produce discontent, that he rose to oppose it. He confessed that all the Members who had spoken on the opposite side had dealt openly, fairly, and with the utmost candour ; for they had plainly told the Committee, if the bill was to pass at all, it must pass in its present shape. He did not mean to say it was not to be subject to modifications, but only that the principle of action on which they proceeded was, that every man's income was to be taxed alike. Now there was a wide distinction between taxing men according to their means, and taxing them alike. He believed there was, as the Attorney General had observed, a spirit in the country to defend its Constitution ; that the people loved and would support laws which they were convinced were calculated for their happiness. No man was more anxious to foster that spirit than himself, but he believed such a measure as this now proposed was but ill calculated to give it effect. The worthy Alderman had stated, that the city of London had arrived at a pitch of patriotism almost unexampled. He should have been pleased had they evinced their patriotism

fooner ; but late as it was, he welcomed and was happy to find it. He knew they had been formerly more distinguished for professions than any thing else. In one instance, they had come forward with what they called the Loyalty Loan ; but, perhaps, the Committee would not be able to recollect any circumstance respecting that measure which would induce it to pay much attention to their professions, for a greater clamour never was raised than was afterwards produced by that very loan which had been so disinterestedly advanced. The question with him was, whether he could agree to a tax on all income in Great Britain as well as out of it ? He feared it would be difficult to prevent those persons who resided out of Great Britain, and felt the effect of this tax, from saying, that it was a tax on the funds. “ Suppose (said Mr. Tierney) I, from the increasing pressure of my affairs, had been unable to continue in this country, and had gone abroad in order to bring my embarrassed circumstances round ; what property I might have possessed I should have placed in the funds, where it would have neither been subject to the risk of bankruptcy, nor the expence of agency, but would have been always forthcoming. After having done so, should I be told that I was only to have nine-tenths of what I had left upon the faith of receiving the whole, and on which speculation I had made by establishment ? And is it not a circumstance materially affecting the credit of the country, to put it in the power of any one to say you have taxed the funds ? ” He added, take a man who embarks his money in mines and canals, his speculation was not so much for income as to get back his capital ; and therefore when his income was taxed, it was equally the same as taxing his capital. Persons who exposed their property on hazardous or adventurous enterprises, did so with a view of receiving back their capital ; how then could the Committee flatter itself, that while a tax was laid on such enterprises, it was a tax on income ? It was to all intents a tax on capital—a tax calculated to check that spirit of adventure and enterprise, which had been most productive of the advantages the country enjoyed. With respect to the farmer, the argument was the same : a man took a farm, perhaps, with a long lease and out of repair, he employed his capital in agriculture. By such a tax as this, he would be prevented from laying it out, as the progress of its return would be impeded. Thus, whether, with regard to commerce or agriculture, the tax would have the effect of putting a stop to that energy which, for the prosperity of the country, ought always to be encouraged. He had no wish to interpose any delay ; but in consequence of the broad principles he had laid down, he felt it incumbent on him, in the first instance, to set his face

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against the measure. He farther stated, that a tax on income never could operate equally; for instance, take the funds—to be sure it might be replied to what he was about to observe, that men made their election, whether they would purchase land, or into the funds, with their money; but suppose one man was contented with three per cent. for the sake of having land, another got six per cent. in the funds; under such circumstances tax all equally, and there would be no injustice; but there were persons who embarked in the funds when they could only get three per cent. In 1792 a man might have bought as much consols. for 10,000*l.* as would have brought him 300*l.* a year. War continued to be carried on, and his property became less valuable every day; but take the man who made his money by the war, and he would purchase at the rate of 300*l.* a year for 5,000*l.*; then he would ask, Whether, on any principle of justice, an equal tax was right under such circumstances? He next referred to the situation of widows left with jointures, observing, that there could be no one who must not feel for a poor infirm old woman, whose pittance was reduced by such a tax as this. He next proceeded to consider the hardship of it on officers in the navy and army, particularly the staff officers. He read with a great deal of humour an anonymous letter from one of the latter description, stating, that he had nothing to live on but his pay; but Government did not pay him. They asked for a tenth of his income; his income consisted of his pay, and his pay existed only in the imagination of Ministers. He said he had ever been a candidate for persons in high offices having high salaries; but when the present bill passed, he should consider 10,000*l.* a year too much for any man to possess for any services he might perform; severe retrenchment would be absolutely necessary. He then referred to the subject of Corporations; their expences had been termed innocent hospitality; but he would say, the instant the widow's mite was taken away, that innocent hospitality ought to be termed gluttony. He said, in our present situation, some of the greater emoluments of the Church ought to be taxed. With respect to inferior clergy, he believed nothing could be more effectually detrimental to religion than the situation in which many of them were kept. To break down the respectability and reduce the rank of the ministers of religion, tended more than any one thing to injure the doctrine they were appointed to inculcate; and if the present bill, so injurious to the class he was speaking of, passed, we might still have the anthem, the organ, and the mace, in our cathedrals; but in our villages, the real piety of the Christian religion would be gone. What could be more galling than that a man of 500*l.* a year, who laboured for it,

should pay a tenth of his income, when no more was exacted from those who possessed one thousand and ten thousand a year for doing nothing? An objection to this bill was, that it would shew every bit of property in the country; and he asked, Whether it would be likely to do good, to put on record the exact amount of the incomes of the several bodies corporate throughout the kingdom? He believed they would not be fond themselves of rendering an account of their possessions, lest, in the hour of distress, Government should know where to lay their hands. The Church was proverbially jealous, and he believed, in some Deans and Chapters, the Burfers were obliged to take an oath not to betray their secrets. This hint he merely gave in kindness and caution [a laugh]. He then argued at some length upon the inequality of the tax, which he humorously illustrated with this observation. Suppose, said he, it was proposed to take away a tenth from every man's height, let him be what size he might; you take away a tenth from a man six feet high, and you leave a man still of a tolerable good size, fit for all the offices of man. You take a tenth from a man five feet high, and you leave a reasonable sized being. But when you take a tenth from one who is only about four feet, or hardly that, you leave a figure only fit to be exhibited among the other curiosities of nature at Exeter Change. Or taking a tenth of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's eloquence, you left him enough for ordinary purposes—but to take a tenth from some persons, would leave them scarce any at all. He concluded by observing, that if we had no means of resisting an enemy, but by so violent a measure, he would assent to it; but he would never agree to it, unless he was assured it was absolutely necessary. He professed his determination to oppose it in every stage.

Lord HAWKESBURY thought, if the principle of raising a large sum within the year were agreed to, no better mode of carrying that principle into effect than by the present measure could be discovered. Perfection was not in human nature, but this came as near it as human wisdom could devise. There were but three ways of raising such a sum; by taxing either capital, expenditure, or income. The first was impracticable, or, if attempted, would be the most vexatious and objectionable of the three; the second had been tried and found inadequate; and there was no choice left but the third, the present bill. The most equal plan in point of impost certainly was that of last year, which was a tax on income in expenditure, but it had failed. He asked if the present tax would not fall as lightly on the poor as on any other class? Would the widow, with a small income, pay less if the tax were laid on articles

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of consumption? Certainly not. But this measure had been most approved by those on whom it would fall most heavily—the mercantile gentlemen in the city of London. A tax on consumption would affect them in a very small degree, their expenditure being seldom equal to their income; and yet they had come forward, much to their honour, and in a manner almost demanded this measure. If a better plan could be proposed, he would adopt it; but as this was the nearest perfection, the most equal that could be found, having the singular merit of keeping all orders of society in their relative situation, he must give it his hearty support. The objections to its inequality had been illustrated by a comparison of taking off a tenth of a man's height; but this bill took nothing from the height of the dwarf. The lowest orders, from whom nothing could be had without taking the bread out of their mouths, were spared. He denied that the bill attacked Corporations or the Church in a partial manner; he had always held these institutions essential to the safety of the Constitution and Laws; but if they were as injurious as they were useful, he would contend for the preservation of their property, since, if it were seized or invaded, all other property would soon follow; a fact of which we had seen a striking instance in France. He contended that the bill, instead of being a plan of indiscriminate rapine, as it had been called, spread itself as equally over the community as any measure could do, having the same object in view.

Mr. Alderman ANDERSON said, great injustice had been done to the city of London, with respect to their patriotic spirit. The merchants and others had stood nobly forward in support of the country on many occasions, particularly in the voluntary contributions, in the list of which he did not find the names of some gentlemen very free in censuring the city.

Mr. TIERNEY wished no more credit to be given to gentlemen of the city for public spirit than they should be found to deserve, and he thought their recommendation and promise of support of the present measure should not have the degree of weight that was given to them, since it might yet be found that their patriotic spirit on this occasion was all vapour. This opinion he founded upon their conduct respecting the loyalty loan. They had come forward with very warm protestations of serving the country at that time; but when the loan fell to a great discount, and they were losers by their loyalty, they came to that House and begged relief. Their public spirit changed into selfish feelings; and possibly they might conduct themselves in a similar manner on this measure. To the voluntary contributions he certainly had not subscribed, because the

taxes he was compelled to pay by that bill were quite as much as he could afford; but he thanked the Alderman for having mentioned them, as it called to mind the noble and truly patriotic conduct of a gentleman in business, and a Member of that House, whose liberality and public spirit must warm the heart of every one who thought on them, and with whom it really was an honour to live in the same country; he would say, if he did not know it was disorderly to name him, Mr. Peel, of Manchester. This gentleman's house alone had subscribed 50,000*l.* while many of the first houses in the city of London, which were worth millions, and boasted of their public spirit, excited contempt by comparison, having given only a paltry 1,000*l.*

Mr. SIMEON said a few words in support of the clause.

Mr. ROBERT THORNTON congratulated the House and the country on the proposed bill, and the general support it received. Who would have supposed, two years ago, that this Dutch tax would have met with so much approbation? A tax on income was the most equal that could be proposed, as it would fall equally on all property, which was in itself very unequal, some men having no property at all. An honourable gentleman had spoken ludicrously of cutting a slice off men's heads to make them equal; in doing so he might, perhaps, go down to the neck, and cut the head off altogether, as they had done in France. This was a French principle of which he was not very fond. The merchants of the city of London, a class to which he had the honour of belonging, had been much distressed by the war; but, he admitted, they were better able to struggle through its difficulties than other classes, as they had opportunities of repaying themselves by advantages in one way what they lost in another. They were doubly taxed, but they were doubly able to bear it. Notwithstanding these circumstances, they had come forward with spirit on every occasion in support of the country. In all public subscriptions they took the lead. The honourable gentleman had mentioned their want of spirit, with regard to the Loyalty Loan, but if they found it necessary to secure themselves against a heavy loss, he could not blame them. He (Mr. Thornton) had had a part of that loan, but he never made any application on the subject. Others, however, might stand in a different situation. Very good and loyal men might calculate on losing five or six per cent. by their subscriptions; but when the loss extended to 15 or 20 per cent. they might not be prepared to meet it, and yet be good loyal men notwithstanding. He approved of the principle and generality of the bill; but there were some clauses which he should propose to amend when they came under the con-

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sideration of the Committee. Particular classes should be favoured, Such as women with a small pittance. Single women who cannot undertake laborious employments, should also be considered. It was not in their power to assist themselves in a way in which men can do it. Another class of people that should be spared were clergymen and curates, with small incomes.

Mr. DENT said a few words.

Mr. W. SMITH thought his honourable friend (Mr. Tierney) had been completely justified in all he had said respecting the merchants of London, by the acknowledgments of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Thornton). They felt the effects of the war less than other classes, and might therefore be more ready to give it support; but Mr. Smith denied that their opinion should pass as the sentiments of the city of London at large, composed as it was of numerous and various classes. Mr. Smith then made some objections to the clause.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL replied.

Sir G. P. TURNER said he had just arrived from the country two hours. As all knew war could not be carried on without money, and this plan he thought the best for raising it, a tax on income was the best of all taxes: he had long recommended it. He believed he was the first to propose in that House this very tax. He had long recommended a tax on the funds; and he thought he need not say he was interested in such a measure: this bill taxed the funds, and that part of it he also considered as of his originating. The ladies had been spoken for. He wished also to speak in behalf of the farmers. If the income of farmers was curtailed, the consequence would be, they would raise the price of corn, and then provisions would grow dearer, till God knows where the evil would end. He approved of the bill, and he took great credit to himself for having always supported the present Minister. He trusted that this bill would shew the desperate French we can lay aside our luxuries, and give up a part of our income to defend our Constitution and laws. Sir Gregory concluded by hoping this bill would be so modified as to do away all those little jealousies of one man paying more than another.

Mr. WIGLEY said a few words in reply. He would not divide the House on particular parts of the clause, but he would wait till he could divide against the clause altogether.

The CHAIRMAN put the question on inserting the words "office, stipend, pension," which was carried. The questions on the scale of charge, and on other parts of the first clause, were afterwards put and carried without a division.

Mr. TIERNEY moved, that the word "*all*" (income) be left out. He did not wish to give trouble; but his object in this was, to make the bill fall properly on incomes. His motion was negatived; and the question being put "that the whole of the first clause do pass," the House divided—Ayes, 123; Noes, 9.

The Committee reported progress, and asked leave to sit again to-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, December 18.

Lord GRENVILLE moved the order of the day for the second reading of the bill for enabling His Majesty to accept the services of such British Militia regiments as should be willing to serve in Ireland.

Lord HOLLAND opposed it. That the measure was not such as should be passed as a matter of course; that it was one which involved a question of great delicacy and importance; and that would, at least, leave the possibility of an imputation on the Legislature. Having violated their pledge, and broken their contract, were propositions so clear, that it would be a waste of breath and time to insist upon them; and it was not necessary to refer to the arguments used last year to establish them, since even the supporters of the bill at that time admitted them. Taking it for granted, therefore, that such was its nature, and viewing it in every other light as connected with the safety and liberty of this country, he could not help conceiving it an imputation on His Majesty's Ministers that they did not move for a call of the House on a question of such great importance, and that they chose rather to hurry it forward with a thin attendance than have it maturely and deliberately discussed in a full one. That no argument could be drawn from its then adoption in favour of repassing it now, the time of reasoning which was adopted in its support, was sufficient to prove—The supporters of the bill were then so struck with the danger of the measure, that they all expressed fears for the Constitution of the country; nay, some passed the only night (that elapsed between its mention and its becoming a law) in sleepless anxiety. It was true, indeed, that on the Secretary of State's (under whose auspices it was introduced in that House) declaring, that it was necessary (and it was surely natural that he would express an opinion that his own measure

was necessary) their scruples were hushed, and their apprehensions vanished: but by this line of conduct, though they admitted the urgent necessity, they even deprecated and expressed their abhorrence of the principle: and their conduct proved, if it proved any thing, not that they thought such a proceeding right in itself, but merely justifiable by immediate and urgent necessity. For his part, he thought the plea of necessity should not have been so readily acquiesced in, and that he would not be justified in giving his assent, unless those exigencies were most clearly and satisfactorily made out on which such an unconstitutional step was sought to be defended. It was then said, he admitted, that there was a Rebellion in Ireland; but he believed between the situation of that country then and now, there existed a very material difference. Had he been convinced at that time by the Secretary of State that there was an absolute necessity for sending the militia to Ireland, and that it was an efficacious remedy for the suppression of the Rebellion, he might, perhaps, reluctantly (for it would always be reluctantly that he should make the slightest deviation from so important a general principle) have given up to the claim of the moment, the control of the legislature to the militia and the people. But at present the case was very different; there was no Rebellion in Ireland; and if the discontents that existed there were to be made the pretext, he thought the noble Lord should come forward and explain how, and in what manner, the presence of the militia was necessary to allay these discontents, and restore perfect tranquillity. If the system of governing that country by coercion was to be abandoned, and one of conciliation henceforth pursued, the noble Lord should have been ready to give some satisfactory explanation on that point, and state his reasons for considering the services of the militia essential to the purpose, and how long they would be necessarily required. When the existence of a rebellion, or the apprehension of an invader, was urged as the pretext, at least the necessity, if admitted at all, was great, and the prospect of the measure remedying the evil was plausible. "When that rebellion is crushed (the people might say), or when that army is repelled, the militia will return to their country, and the temporary suspension of the contract and deviation from the principle will be compensated by the advantages:" but when they are told that their militia are sent to Ireland to prevent insurrection, to keep down discontent, and to preserve peace in the country, and are not to tell when or how measures are to be taken, to reconcile the discontented, and to calm the minds of the people, then they may exclaim with truth: "Our militia is taken from us; the faith of Parliament is broken; it is not sent on the

urgency of the moment, it is converted into the standing army of another kingdom, and employed to maintain the peace, and keep down the people in Ireland." Much weight had been laid by those who supported the measure last session on the circumstance, that the service was to be voluntary. He would, however, recommend it to those who were influenced by that consideration to look back, and see how far they were justified by experience to conclude that the service was really voluntary, and that the militia regiments who went to Ireland, or those who staid behind, acted from the pure impulse of their free will and discretion. So far from that being the case, reports had reached his ears, the truth of which he had no reason to doubt, that in many regiments which had volunteered their services, those men who differed from the majority of their companions, and resolved to adhere with firmness to the principle of their establishment, which confined them to domestic service, were ordered to appear in the ranks with their coats turned, and treated with every other mark of ignominy and disgrace. In others, that shewed no disposition to leave home, indirect means and solicitations were used by their officers, who happened to be particularly interested in that country, to gain their consent; while others were kept back by their superiors, who did not wish to undertake such service, from similar motives of prudence and local interest. In short, while these services were supposed to be perfectly voluntary, they were almost in every instance influenced and controled, and attended with as much canvassing and intercession as a borough election. By this improper exercise of the measure, the promise held out that none but voluntary services would be required, was violated, and the discipline of the militia had materially suffered. For these reasons he thought a call of the House was necessary, in order that a measure, objectionable on so many grounds, should receive a full and deliberate investigation. It could not be said of it as of other measures that had been once adopted, that the principle was already fully discussed and approved, and should be, therefore, taken as a point settled. The principle of the present measure was never approved, even by its most strenuous advocates. It was admitted to be unconstitutional, and only justified by necessity. But a material difference in the circumstances under which this necessity was urged, and which governed the judgement of the House on its former adoption, had since taken place, so that the question was now as new as if this was the first time the measure was brought forward. His Lordship begged pardon for troubling the House so long. He felt all the inconvenience of pressing an ungrateful sub-

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ject, and assured their Lordships he would not have done so if he did not conceive it to be his duty.

Lord GRENVILLE said, if his Lordship had been more accustomed to the rules and proceedings of that House, he would have scarcely charged it as an imputation on His Majesty's, Ministers that they did not summon a full attendance for the discussion of the present measure. It was not his privilege more than any other Member's, to move for a call of the House; and the noble Lord, if he thought the question was one that made such a proceeding necessary, was competent to enforce it. For his part, he thought otherwise before he came down to the House, and nothing which he had heard from the noble Lord had inclined him to alter his opinion. The noble Lord had stated that the measure was unconstitutional, and that that point was so clear and obvious, he conceived it would be unnecessary to argue it. For his part, he thought very differently. Whatever might be the original terms of the militia establishment, on the faith of which men might enter into that service, the two Houses of Parliament were the trustees of those terms, which were to be acted upon under their discretion. But in the strictest sense and interpretation of the principle of the militia establishment, as an armed force for the defence of England, he did not consider a measure authorising their services in Ireland as a violation of it. For he would put it to every man in the country, and he would ask, in whatever point of view it was considered, if there was any thing more essential to the defence of England than the safety of Ireland? It was to the glorious exertions of the militia, who so generously offered to protect their brethren in that kingdom from the blessings of French fraternity and French liberty, that the whole, or, at all events, the greater part of it, did not become a prey to a most horrible and savage rebellion; a rebellion fomented by the worst of treasons, by professed and recorded traitors, acting in combination with France for the ruin and dismemberment of the empire, and in aid and prosecution of her ultimate designs against the liberties and existence of England. In this point of view, therefore, he conceived that the British militia could not have more effectually contributed to the defence of this country, than by their meritorious services in Ireland; and therefore that their acquiescence in such services was strictly conformable to the spirit of their institution. As to what was required by the noble Lord, respecting the duration of such service, he was not competent to give a positive answer. Ministers could not see into the womb of futurity, and declare what things shall come to pass, or regulate the course of events. The rebellion in Ireland was curbed and restrained; still, however, a

state of things existed in that country which made the continuance of the militia necessary. How long that state of things should endure, and for what period the service of the militia might be found essential for allaying the discontents that prevailed there, he could not tell; but certain he was, that the most effectual mode for the restoration of perfect tranquillity was a perseverance in the firm and vigorous measures which had been pursued with so much success by Government, acting under the sanction of the Legislatures of both countries. So much for the necessity of the measure, and its coincidence with the principle of the militia establishment. As to what was urged respecting abuses exercised under the act of last session, by which the services were not rendered as purely voluntary as the act intended, his observations should be very few. The noble Lord had said, that reports had reached his ears of various instances, in which undue influence was exercised to extort those services which should have been purely voluntary. He did not know on what authority such reports might rest, but he was ready to admit that if any such practice prevailed, it was unauthorised by the act, and could be no more guarded against by legislative provisions than many other abuses to which all other institutions were liable in their internal economy and management. But if the noble Lord meant that endeavours had been used to excite emulation, he had no hesitation to admit so far the truth of such reports. He hoped a laudable emulation for the service of their country would always inspire the militia of England; and that such kind of military feeling would ever be found in that and every other part of our army. By what process, however, a spirit of emulation could tend to destroy discipline, he was at a loss to conjecture. Experience warranted no such deduction. From any thing alledged in this country; in all the complaints that had been made from *that*, he never was able to learn, or understand, that the militia regiments who had volunteered their services had fallen off in their discipline; or that any charge of failure, in that particular, had been brought against them. No such imputation, therefore, should be lightly thrown upon a body of men, to whose generosity the empire stood so much indebted. To their loyal exertions it was owing that Ireland was rescued from the horrors that surrounded her; and to them was also to be attributed the knowledge which the French had gained, in their late descent on that kingdom, that even though their fleets should escape the vigilance of ours, they would be sure to meet, on landing, an army composed of our militia regiments, of the regular forces, and of the brave and loyal subjects of that country, more than sufficient to defeat their plans, and render all their views, however favoured by

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domestic traitors, totally abortive. His Lordship said, he should not trouble the House any longer, but on these grounds rest the propriety of the second reading.

The bill was then read a second time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, December 18.

There not being a sufficient number of Members to constitute a House, an adjournment took place.

Wednesday, December 19.

On the third reading of the bill, for enlarging the time limited, for the redemption of the land tax,

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR spoke to the following effect:— I certainly must oppose the third reading of a bill, the object of which is, to confirm, and, perhaps, to perpetuate regulations, to the passing of which, when the measure was originally proposed, I felt the strongest repugnance, and of which nothing I have since heard has tended to give me a more favourable impression. It is not my intention, however, at this time, to dwell on the various objections which might be urged against the plan in general, namely, that for redeeming the land tax, having stated them at some length in the course of a former session. But I think it necessary to touch upon some particulars, which seem to me peculiarly entitled to the attention of the House, being intimately connected, not only with this bill, but also with another measure now depending, namely, that for imposing a tax on income; as I shall undertake to prove, if the plan for redeeming the land tax had been wisely formed, and if this bill had been properly drawn up, no tax on income would have been necessary.

To explain my meaning, Sir, I must begin with remarking, if the land tax ought to be redeemed, it would have been infinitely better that, from the beginning, it had been sold for ready money, instead of being converted into stock. In short, Sir, it should have been made a direct, and not a circuitous mode of furnishing a supply to the Exchequer: according to the plan that has been adopted, a great political operation will be carried through, much to the dis-

satisfaction, and, in my opinion, to the injury, of that respectable class of the community, the landed interest, without the public deriving from it any immediate or positive advantage; whereas by selling about 550,000*l.* of the now perpetual land tax, *for ready money*, at only eighteen years purchase, it would produce the ten millions wanted to be raised, without augmenting our funded debt a single shilling, and the tax on income might be, at least, postponed until the resources arising from the sale of the land tax were exhausted.

To this alteration in the plan of redeeming the land tax, I cannot at present foresee any possible objection that may not be completely obviated: for in the first place, the only material advantage derived by the public, from exacting the proposed tax on income, is, the raising of ten millions for the service of the year 1799, without making any addition on that account to the funded debt of the nation. By the plan I have taken the liberty of suggesting, you would not only raise that sum, but you would avoid any new and oppressive mode of levying it. In the second place, I have no doubt that the price of stocks would be as high, if this system were adopted, as under any other plan; for we are to consider, that only eleven millions remain to be borrowed for the service of the year 1799: of these four might be taken from the sinking fund; and if the loan in February were reduced to seven millions, the price of stocks would be high, and the loan would probably be obtained on very advantageous terms. The price of the funds, it is true, would not be kept up by purchase on account of the redemption of the land tax; but can those purchases be so very considerable if the tax on income is imposed? Can gentlemen imagine, that if that tax is enforced, that it will have no effect upon the stocks? It has already reduced the price of short annuities. That is admitted. Many must sell out of the funds, or, at least, will not buy what otherwise they would purchase, if they are under the necessity of paying their share of the tax on income; and whatever people may suppose, that unfortunate measure, extending to the stocks themselves, will make many prudent people more cautious in getting into the funds, and more eager to get out of them. In the third place, let the tax on income be resorted to, if it should prove ultimately necessary: but can any man imagine, that the sum of ten millions now wanted will not be raised, or, at least, contracted for, to be furnished for the service of the ensuing year, if the public is certain that no tax on income will be imposed, if the money is found from the sale of the land tax? The landed proprietor will naturally make every possible exertion to raise as much as he can, as

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it will prevent him from being exposed to an oppressive tax, and to the disclosure of his property; and if he must borrow the money, it is for the advantage of the monied interest, with the same views, to assist him on very moderate terms, for his whole income may thereby be exempted from decimation. In short, it is for the real benefit of the whole community to concur in this mode of redeeming the land tax; nor can there be a single doubt of the superior advantage of this plan, and the propriety of adopting it, unless it is thought necessary, at all events, to impose a tax upon income, for the purpose of trying; first, what is the amount of the income of the people of this country; next, what they can afford to pay out of it; and thirdly, to what oppressive regulations they will patiently submit, for the purpose of exacting the payment.

I thought it necessary to mention this idea to the House upon the present occasion, because if the plan I have now suggested had the good fortune of being approved of, it might not yet be too late to carry it into effect, by reconsidering the regulations contained in this bill, and by abandoning, or, at least, postponing, the threatened tax upon income.

But, Sir, if the measure I have now suggested is not to be adopted, I have a strong objection to our passing this bill, and thereby facilitating, by any means whatsoever, the sale of the land tax, as this is a very improper time for carrying the plan into effect; and we are, in fact, throwing away a most valuable resource, of which, at a future period, we might have availed ourselves infinitely more to the public advantage.

Here I must take the liberty of observing, that this plan is far from being a new idea; on the contrary, it was suggested to me, from various quarters, in the course of some financial inquiries in which I happened to be engaged some years ago, and more particularly in a letter from one of the most respectable Members of this House, the substance of which I must take the liberty of reading. In this letter, which is dated September 4, 1792, it is said, "that an idea was then getting abroad that the land tax, at its present rate, might be offered to the respective landholders at even thirty years purchase. That the money thus raised might be applied in aid of the annual million; that many inconveniences might be stated to arise, which might be obviated, were a Committee to be appointed for the particular purpose of considering the subject; that the decreasing rate of the interest of money at that time appeared to make the period when that letter was written (4th of September, 1792,) particularly favourable for such an attempt; and if I would undertake to make such a motion myself, or con-

“sidered it as a plan likely to be of service to the public, he (the
 “writer of the letter) would take every opportunity in his power of
 “consulting the general sense of the people in his neighbourhood on
 “that subject.”

From this letter it appears an idea was entertained, that the land tax might be fold, in 1792, not at eighteen, but even as high as thirty years purchase. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that this should be considered a very improper period for bringing such a measure forward. Even at that time, and with a chance of its selling at thirty years purchase, I did not consider it as a scheme likely to be advantageous to the public, otherwise it might have been brought under the consideration of this House above six years ago; and it was not out of political hostility to the right honourable gentleman, but from a full conviction of the inexpediency of the measure that I took for active a part last session in endeavouring to prevent its passing into a law.

The only other point connected with the general plan for redeeming the land tax, which I shall touch upon at present, relates to the public and private expences which it must necessarily occasion. In regard to the public expences, I am persuaded, that ultimately they will be very considerable, and they ought to be watched with very peculiar jealousy. Such a train of Commissioners, clerks, and other officers, are not to be fed and paid for nothing; and it is rather a suspicious circumstance, that it is proposed to pass this bill, previous to our receiving an account of the expences already incurred, and an estimate of those likely to be incurred in the execution of the bill. In regard to the expences of individuals, I was always apprehensive that they would prove very considerable, and that apprehension was considerably strengthened by what dropt from a great legal authority, in the course of a late discussion, “if you
 “alter that clause,” he said, “in the manner that is proposed, the
 “expences of the sale will amount to more than the value of the
 “land sold.” Indeed what else can be expected from a subject so extensive, and so full of doubt and intricacy, which has already required two large acts, besides one with which we are threatened from Scotland, and which, at least, require half a dozen more before it can be completely executed in one-tenth part of the kingdom? The acts, indeed, on this single subject, will become so numerous and so voluminous, that we shall probably be under the necessity of having a separate table for holding the new code.

I must now proceed to consider the leading object of this bill, namely, that of enlarging the time limited by the former law, within which proprietors had a preference in purchasing the land

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tax of their respective estates. Such an extension is perfectly consistent with the views of the right honourable gentleman who brought in this bill, who seems resolved to make any sacrifice for the purpose of raising the price of stocks, bettering the funds, and gratifying the monied interest for the moment; but in every other point of view, the proposed prolongation is highly exceptionable. No man is more desirous than I am, on proper principles, to see our public securities, of every description, selling at a high price. But I cannot agree, from any wish of that sort, to sacrifice, or even to retard, the improvement of the country. If our landed gentlemen are tempted by this prolongation to lay out any sums of money they may have at their command, in redeeming their land tax, instead of improving their estates, the price of stocks may receive a temporary impulse; but the real foundation of our national wealth, and the best security of the public creditor, namely, the progressive improvement of the country, will be neglected.

I am particularly led to make this remark from observing, that much fewer petitions for bills to promote private improvements have been presented this session than in the course of almost any that I can at present recollect. The House and the Public will then see the fatal tendency and the ultimate effect of the measures we are now pursuing. If country gentlemen are on the one hand oppressed by taxes, and on the other tempted to lay out any money they can afford in the purchase of their land tax, how can they improve their estates? They cannot lay out money for all those purposes, and, the most important of the whole, for the public interest, may be either despised or forgotten. I should less dwell on this point, were the sale of the land tax to prevent the threatened tax on income, and all the pernicious consequences, which must result from that measure.

Besides, Sir, it is proposed, that our farmers and our country gentlemen shall not only be deprived of the means of carrying on improvements, but that they shall become stock jobbers, and if this measure succeeds, according to the expectations and wishes of those who have introduced it, I should not be surprized to hear Squire this, and Farmer that, boasting of their knowledge in the price of stocks, and all the arcana of the funding system, instead of what formerly used to be their pride, namely, skill in the management of their estates, and knowledge in the art of agriculture. The Board of Agriculture must of course transfer its sittings to Lloyd's Coffee House, or Change Alley, and the farmers' club will be no longer held at the Thatched House, but at the London Tavern. In short, Sir, I am afraid that this plan of compelling our husband-

men to become stock jobbers will contribute to alter the nature of their pursuits and the whole turn of their ideas. Whether we shall gain any thing by the change, I shall leave to the judgement of the House to determine; but the apprehension of the effect that it might have, induced me to reject the measure when it was originally proposed, and now to suggest to the House the plan of selling the land tax, for ready money, instead of stock, which, so far as I can judge, is a measure, in every point of view, infinitely to be preferred.

But, Sir, we are told, that the liberty of purchasing the land tax, even on the present terms, is a boon to the landed interest; that it has succeeded to a considerable extent, and that as soon as this bill passes, it will be carried much farther. For my part, Sir, so far as my knowledge or information reaches, there is no solid foundation for such assertion. In particular districts, some friends or dependents of the Minister, to give the measure some *clat*, or, perhaps, some rustic *simpletons*, inexperienced in political artifices, and deluded by the emissaries of the right honourable gentleman, may have taken some steps for purchasing; but the generality of landholders have too much good sense to be taken in. Indeed what man of common understanding would lay out his money at 5 per cent., when, by expending it on the improvement of his estate, he might get from 7 to 10, with the satisfaction also of giving employment to the industrious poor in his neighbourhood, and of promoting, in the most effectual manner, the general advantage of the country? I admit that the case would be different, if the sale of the land tax could prevent the tax on income, the effects of which must be so extensively fatal to all the classes of the community, and to the landed interest among the rest, that no sacrifice would be too great, to escape its destructive operations.

I have now, Sir, done my duty, in urging these objections to the bill. I know well, Sir, that in the present temper of these delirious times, it is impossible to expect success, in attempting to oppose any measure which the right honourable gentleman brings forward: at the same time I feel it incumbent upon me to state my sentiments, more especially on such a subject as the present; though, the exertions of an individual, in these days of triumphant majorities, must be unavailing. I shall only add, Sir, that however much I disapprove of the whole of this measure, unless it were altered in the manner which I have taken the liberty of suggesting, there is another plan of a similar nature, I mean the tythe redemption bill, which, I understand, is under the right honourable gentleman's consideration, which I earnestly wish he would propose to the House. There is nothing in the whole range of political

regulation that could either be so useful to the country, or so creditable to the individual, who had the good fortune to carry it through successfully.

The Right Honourable D. RYDER thought it very unnecessary to say much; he only should comment a little upon some parts of the honourable Baronet's speech. The delay wished for by the honourable Baronet was for a most singular effect: it was to give all the evils that could be attendant upon the bill of last year, without any of the benefits of the present measure. It was not for the purpose of giving relief to the landed gentlemen, but for the purpose of converting the measure into a plan for raising the supplies for the year; and yet the honourable Baronet assured the House, that none would purchase but a few rustic simpletons—but at the same time the honourable Baronet said, fifteen years ago they would purchase at 30 per cent. but now they would not at 18 per cent.—such was the reasoning of the honourable Member. Another apprehension of the honourable Baronet seemed equally well founded; he was apprehensive that the landholders and farmers would turn stock jobbers, but he thought this bill was a measure to prevent such inconvenience, by allowing them to purchase in ready money. It took the stock out of their hands, and prevented all future speculation. If the Board of Agriculture should, as was apprehended by the honourable Baronet, ever take their stand in the Stock Exchange, and the members become little financiers, from the example of their President, the nation must expect immense advantages, as appeared from the specimen of financial wisdom evinced by their head. He did not think it at all necessary to add any farther argument, but should rest content with what he had already said.

Sir J. SINCLAIR explained.

Mr. LEFEVRE said, he was one of the rustic simpletons condemned by the honourable Baronet. He very much approved of the measure, and believed no act was ever carried into effect with little expence to the country. He knew it was impossible to lay an account of the expence before the House as yet; and when it was before them it could not be exact, but he believed it would not exceed 100,000l.

Mr. ELLISON spoke in favour of the bill.

Mr. BUXTON thought that one of the advantages of this measure was to prevent farmers having any connection with the stocks by allowing them to purchase for ready money.

The bill was then read a third time, and several clauses added by way riders.

Upon the question that the bill do pass,

Sir W. GEARY said, he did not rise to oppose the passing of this bill, but for a very great and important purpose; to speak to the order of the proceedings of that House. He had observed a vast number of clauses introduced after the third reading of this and many other bills; when first he conceived a wish to become one of the representatives of the people of England in Parliament, his first object was to preserve and to hand down to posterity the practical excellence of the Constitution of England, as it had been transmitted to us by our ancestors, in doing which he could not forget the importance of the forms of proceeding in the House of Commons; they were all established for the wise purpose of affording time for deliberation, and to enable the House to correct the errors of the Executive Government. It was in the Committee, and in the Committee only, that clauses ought to be considered, for that was the stage allotted for them; it was highly improper, inasmuch, as it was inconsistent with deliberation, that a great number of clauses should be added in a few minutes, after the third reading of a bill. He did not say this, from an idea that the Minister had introduced any clauses that were improper into the present bill; he only rose to say, that the practice was become much too common, and that it should be discontinued.

Mr. SPEAKER observed, it was desirable that every proposition made in that House should pass through all the stages which the wisdom of our ancestors had declared to be necessary, in order to afford to every Member an opportunity of delivering his sentiments upon it; if, however, gentlemen imagined it was an invasion of the old and established practice of the House to propose clauses on the report, or after the third reading of a bill, that imagination was erroneous; the practice, however, of bringing up clauses after the report, or the third reading, ought to be watched with jealousy; and in such stages no clause ought to be proposed that tended to make any material alteration in the bill. Such clauses as tended to facilitate the execution of the purposes of the bill, and to carry into effect more conveniently those measures which the House had approved of, were not liable to objection either on the report or after the third reading, but any clause that introduced any novelty in point of substance into the bill, after it had passed the Committee, ought not to be acceded to: he observed, however, that in the present case no clause had been offered that was of a nature inconsistent with the tenor of the bill, and therefore did not call for the interference of the House. The House, however, would not be prevented from exercising a watchful jealousy over every clause that was pro-

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posed to be added to a bill after the report. It was a jealousy that was quite consistent with the duty of the House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it was perfectly competent to any Member, if he found in any clause a syllable that he disapproved, to oppose that clause after the third reading of the bill, as well as if it was proposed in a Committee. He was in the recollection of those who heard the clauses, and he appealed to them to say whether any one of the clauses he had proposed this night was inconsistent with the general scope of the bill: he was entitled then to say that, however true the general doctrine laid down to-night might be, it might as well be said of any other measure as of that which was now in the Speaker's hand.

Sir W. PULTENEY agreed to every thing that had been said of the necessity of watching with a jealous eye every clause that was proposed after the report. The Committee was undoubtedly the stage for the discussion of clauses; and from the practice of receiving them on the report, or after the third reading, the House might be very much imposed upon. He did not attend to the clauses which were proposed to-night; he could not understand them if he had attended, for the noise would have made that impossible: however, he took it for granted that they were, as the Speaker had stated them, agreeable to the tenour of the bill. But this introduction of clauses after the Committee was over, was a very bad practice, and ought to be checked; for which purpose perhaps it would not be a bad expedient to make an order, that no clauses should be received after a bill had passed a Committee, unless there was at least a day's notice of an intention to produce them.

Sir W. GEARY said a few words.

Mr. SPEAKER observed, that many of the most experienced Members of the House had stated to him great inconveniences that arose from the manner in which bills are discussed upon a re-commitment. Indeed he was aware gentlemen had felt the confusion and embarrassment to be almost endless in some cases. This appeared to him to be capable of remedy. The mode now was to print a bill when it was ordered to be re-committed, in the same manner as if it was printed without a view to its being re-committed, that is, the bill and amendments were printed distinctly from each other, and when they came to be discussed on the re-commitment, the amendments were all referred to, instead of following it in order: these references created great embarrassment; to remedy which, he submitted, that instead of making references to the amendments, the bill with the amendments should be printed altogether in the same manner as if the order made for printing had

been made before the second reading, in order that the House might see the whole bill and amendments as they actually stood, instead of making references to the amendments. This he only suggested as one way of obviating much difficulty. The bill was then passed.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of the income bill. The House resolved itself into a Committee.

Mr. WIGLEY objected to the clause which extended the provisions of the bill to such persons as might have gone out of the country for any temporary purpose. In his opinion it was extremely hard that those persons should be liable to the penalties of the bill, merely because a notice might have been left at their last place of residence previous to their departure.

Mr. Chancellor PITT could by no means coincide in the opinion of the learned gentleman, for he could see nothing like a hardship in calling for the contributions of those who possessed wealth in the country, wheresoever they might be in person, especially as their temporary absence might be occasioned by the pursuit of some gainful object.

Colonel MARK WOOD urged nearly the same objection, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer adhered to his former reason for not thinking the objection admissible.

The clause was then put and agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that as the next clause respected the appointment of the Commissioners who were to be entrusted with the execution of the bill, he would, before the Committee proceeded farther in the consideration of the clauses, take the present opportunity of alluding to certain regulations which, upon a reconsideration of the business, he thought it might be expedient to introduce into the inquiry it might be necessary to make into mercantile property. These regulations were suggested to him by the information he received this morning from a number of gentlemen who had the success of the measure now before the Committee extremely at heart, and who assured him that the adopting of those regulations would not only remove the objection arising from the disclosure of mercantile accounts, but would also considerably contribute to improve the bill, by securing the collection of the revenue, while it effectually avoided the ultimate publicity of the private concerns of commercial men. With respect to the other denominations of property, he did not see that the same reason existed for proposing any new regulations. The general mode already adopted in the bill was, in his opinion, fully adequate to those purposes. But by

the mode which he had to propose for ascertaining the amount of commercial property, an opportunity would first be afforded to the surveyor and the commissioners to examine into the statement of property delivered in ; it next gave an opportunity to the Commissioners of calling for a schedule, if they should deem it necessary ; and it then furnished a subsequent opportunity to the surveyor, after having duly heard evidence, to proceed to the ordinary mode of collecting the tax. Here, however, it would be necessary to impose some restrictions on the powers granted to the surveyors. The first modification, therefore, which it might be proper to adopt was, that a schedule should not be insisted on at the mere pleasure and suggestion of the surveyor, who should not be warranted in calling for the schedule, unless the major part of the Commissioners, after duly examining into the statement of income voluntarily given in, should judge it necessary to have a schedule produced. The next modification he would propose, which would remove a material objection, was, that the surveyor should not be present at the examination of the schedule, should it be called for by a majority of the Commissioners, though afterwards it would be necessary to acquaint the surveyor with the result of the examination, in order to enable him to perform his duty. By adopting this special mode, and applying it to the ascertaining of commercial income, the desired secrecy would be completely obtained. For instead of returning the statement of their income immediately to the surveyor or assessor, the commercial parties concerned may send it in secretly to the Commissioners, which will prevent its passing through the medium of a common assessor. He had moreover to propose, that in order to facilitate the business of the Commissioners, a certain number of assistants should be appointed in each district out of the mercantile body, to whom the Commissioners might refer the schedules delivered in to them, and to whose opinion they may have recourse in order to ascertain the situation of the parties, and examine into the sum charged upon them, in order to see how far it coincides with the statement voluntarily delivered in. Should the commercial assistants pronounce the sum charged by the assessor not to exceed what he was justified in charging, then the assessor would be empowered to insist upon the production of the schedule ; but not so unless it was the opinion of the major part of the Commissioners that the schedule should be produced. The commercial assistants entrusted with these powers, should be tied down under an oath of secrecy, and therefore all publicity would be avoided, and no disclosure of private circumstances made but to gentlemen of a different description from the surveyors, engaged in commercial pursuits, and equally

interested with themselves in concealing their proceedings. In the next place, in order to prevent the result of the final judgement of the Commissioners from transpiring and becoming public, by returning to the surveyors the amount of the sum the parties concerned are adjudged to pay, a secret book should be kept by the Commissioners, with numbers corresponding to the names of the different parties, while those parties shall be at liberty through themselves or their agents to pay into the Bank of England, or to the Receiver General, the sum in which they are assessed. The parties afterwards, on the production of a certificate to the Special Commissioners, that the sum in which their numbers are assessed, has been paid, shall have their names written off by the Commissioners. But in case of non-payment after a certain time, the Commissioners shall be empowered to open the secret book, and to proceed by public process to recover payment from the parties so failing. For the suggestion of these improvements he was particularly indebted to gentlemen much experienced in commercial concerns, who recalled to his recollection how this very mode had been successfully practised in a business of a far more delicate nature than the present. What he alluded to, was the secret aid granted by Parliament, in 1793, to many respectable commercial gentlemen, who then laboured under a temporary embarrassment. The disclosure of their situation; the degree of aid they each solicited; and the nature of the security given by them for such aid, were communicated only to persons in similar circumstances with themselves, and to such as it is now proposed to make something of a similar disclosure: it never then transpired who were the individuals that received the aid, or to what extent it was granted to them. By adopting in the present measure a like mode of proceeding, mercantile men must feel that they are entirely relieved from all dread of bringing publicity on their private concerns, or disclosing the state of their property. Thus much he thought it necessary to throw out respecting the intended regulations; of which he would enter into a more detailed explanation when the particular clauses containing them came regularly under discussion.

Colonel MARK WOOD approved in a great measure of this improved plan; but he thought it would be still more perfect, if it were made more general, and if all commercial men, as well as of thers, were compelled to balance their books upon a certain day every year, and declare the amount of their profits.

Mr. Alderman CURTIS highly approved of the proposed regulations, and was ready to do every thing in his power to give them effect; he was confident, they might be enforced with the utmost secrecy, for he had the honour of being one of the Commissioners in

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the business of 1793, alluded to by his right honourable friend, and from his own knowledge, he could fairly say, that it had completely answered its proposed object.

Mr. H. BROWN expressed his apprehensions, that these new regulations might tend to weaken the bill, to which he professed himself a very warm friend.

Mr. Chancellor PITT wished to save the time of the Committee by again stating his former observations, that no schedule should be required, unless a great majority of the Commissioners agreed that it ought to be produced. They would take care that the ground upon which it was called for, should be grave, and weighty enough to induce their assent.

Mr. JONES wished to know whether, if the Commissioners divulged the secret, and violated their oath, they should be indictable for perjury?

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that this was not the moment for answering that question. He was ready, however, so far to satisfy the honourable gentleman as to tell him that the oath in question was a promissory oath, and that as such, in the nature of our laws, it did not make those who violated it, indictable for perjury.

Mr. JONES contended that it should be viewed in the light of a contentious oath.

Sir FRANCIS BARING objected to the powers entrusted to the office of surveyor; they were entirely new, and if added to the powers granted last year, would prove inordinate. He wished to see them defined by a particular clause; it was also his desire that the statements given in by commercial houses should be given in in the name of the general concern, and not individually by each partner, and that the private property of each partner should be distinguished from the profits of the trade.

The Chairman, Mr. SMITH, here suggested the propriety of sticking to the clause now before the Committee, which he again read.

Mr. TIERNEY did not disapprove of the new modifications; he rose only to ask if it was the intention of the right honourable gentleman to have the bill reprinted after the new clauses were brought up, or thus he might not have an opportunity of examining them previous to their discussion. He could not, however, omit observing, what a marked difference was now drawn between the mercantile and the landed interest. The one was permitted to benefit their common interest, and to impose taxes upon themselves, under the pretence of commercial expediency, while the landed gentry were

obliged to submit to whatever might be proposed, and be thus dragged through the dirt. Indeed the city patriotism, as appeared before on another occasion, proved very short lived. One worthy Alderman (Mr. Curtis) highly approved of the measure, while another (Mr. Lushington) was clamorous for modifications.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that there was a degree of candour in the first part of the honourable gentleman's speech, which the latter part of it did not betray. He wished the bill to be reprinted that he might study the nature of the proposed clauses, but after confessing his ignorance of them, he proceeded to inveigh against the predilection they shewed for the mercantile interest, to the prejudice of the landed gentry. Indeed the honourable gentleman's diffidence seemed to be as short-lived as the patriotism of the city; for he must have recovered from, or relapsed in to his nature, for the sake of indulging in an invective against the commercial interest, though they little deserved it, as at their express desire they came forward to contribute their full share. Had he not been deprived of an opportunity yesterday by there being no House, he would have then brought forward the regulations he now proposed; but from information he had received this morning, and from the delay that was afforded him, he was happy to say that he could now bring them forward in a more regular and better digested state, which perhaps he could not have done with equal effect yesterday. He could not see that this was a moment for reporting progress; on the contrary, he thought the best way was now to go into the clauses. The new clauses might then be as open for discussion, as those now printed. It was indeed his intention that the bill should be reprinted, but it was also his wish that no time should be lost, but that the discussion might take place on the report.

Mr. TIERNEY, in explanation, said, that it were as well that the right honourable gentleman had not mentioned the circumstance of there being no House yesterday. Those who were in such a hurry to pass the bill before the Christmas holidays, should doubtless have been in their places at four o'clock, while those who opposed that hurry might be permitted to come down a few minutes after; only thirty-six gentlemen however thought proper to attend on a business of such weighty importance, and which they pretended should be carried into effect without delay.

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON begged leave to say a word in support of his consistency, which he trusted was as evident as that of the honourable gentleman, (Mr. Tierney). All he had said was, that he and his constituents approved the principle of the bill, but that he had strong objections to particular parts of it, which

he trusted would be done away, as he felt particular satisfaction at the explanation given by the right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer ; in all this he hoped he was perfectly consistent.

Mr. WILBERFORCE was of opinion that the severe animadversions of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney), on those whom he thought should not have failed in making a House, could be intended only to injure the character of Parliament.

Mr. WIGLEY called to order, and said, that these observations were foreign to the business before the Committee.

Lord HAWKESBURY also called to order, and wished to know what was the question before the House ?

The CHAIRMAN said, there was no question before the Committee, but he was now going to read the clauses.

Sir W. PULTENEY contended that the regulations now proposed in favour of commercial men put the bill altogether in a new light ; it was not, therefore, wrong to enter upon the discussion of it, when its whole system and tenor seemed to be changed.

Mr. WIGLEY rose and contended, that this clause ought to be postponed ; on which a conversation arose on the point of order, when it was decided, that it was necessary, in the first place, to dispose regularly of the clauses of the bill.

Upon the clause for regulating the functions of surveyor, Mr. Tierney suggested, that the Commissioners should have the power of discharging him, in cases where he was officious and oppressive in his surcharges. It had happened last year, in the county of Lincoln, that a surveyor had occasioned much vexation and trouble by surcharges, which were afterwards all discharged by the Commissioners.

Lord HAWKESBURY said, that the very case alluded to, proved, that if such an abuse existed, there already was a disposition to correct it. The surveyor in the county of Lincoln was refused.

To a question, whether the Commissioners were to be paid for their trouble ? The Chancellor of the Exchequer said they were not.

An amendment was likewise made to the clause respecting the powers of the surveyor, by which the Commissioners are left to judge, whether they are to proceed to issue any precept upon the surcharge made by the surveyor ; and to consider and to examine the reasons he had for making it, and decide accordingly.

Upon this point some conversation took place between Sir William Pulteney and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The former said, that the amendment now proposed, had made very mate-

rial alterations in the bill ; when in its original state, it conferred a very dangerous and oppressive power on the surveyor, to harass any person he chose, by calling upon him by a surcharge, to give a statement of his affairs.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that if such an alteration (certainly material, but perfectly consistent with the spirit of the measure) had reconciled the honourable Baronet to the bill, how could he justify the inflammatory language he had used respecting it, when he said it applied whips and scourges to the people of this country ?

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY said, he wanted none of the right honourable gentleman's assistance to defend his consistency. He was not prepared to retract a word of what he had said of the bill in the shape it was first brought forward.

Mr. WIGLEY opposed that part of the bill which empowered the Commissioners to call for a schedule with a detailed statement of a man's circumstances.

Mr. TIERNEY likewise opposed this clause. He said, that before such violent means were used, the right honourable gentleman might try what mildness would do. Even last year's experiment might induce him to do this ; for although there might have been evasion, yet a great part of the sum estimated had been obtained. It would be better to try to raise even a part of this sum without calling for such disclosure.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that to do what the honourable gentleman recommended, would be to enable those who were unwilling to contribute to escape, while it would lay the burden on those who in other cases had evinced a disposition to contribute to the public exigencies.

The Committee then divided upon the clause enabling the Commissioners to call for the disclosure—

For the clause, 80 ; Against it, 4.

On the clause which provides that an appeal shall be allowed from the decision of the Commissioners to other Commissioners, and that the appeal shall be allowed to the surveyor, as well as to the person charged, a debate arose, in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Solicitor General, Mr. Simeon, Mr. Percival and others, supported the clause, and considered it as only a question like of civil suit, and granting a new trial ; and Mr. Tierney, Mr. Wigley, and Sir W. Geary opposed it, and considered the allowance of appeal to the surveyor, like giving an accuser the power of having a man tried a second time for a crime of which he had been acquitted ; for although, in strictness of language, it was not a crime that a man was accused of when he was charged with having

given in a false account of his income ; yet, as it involved his character as a man of honour or of morality, the charge partook of the nature of a criminal charge.

The Committee divided—

For the appeal, 59 ; Against it, 9.

The House being resumed, progress was reported, and leave was given for the Chairman to sit again the following day.

Thursday, December 20.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that before the House proceeded to other business, it was his wish to bring forward a matter which had pressed with a considerable degree of weight upon his mind.

Here the Usher of the Black Rod came to demand the immediate attendance of the House, to hear His Majesty's commission read in the House of Peers.

Mr. SPEAKER, upon his return, reported, that His Majesty's assent was given by commission to the bill authorizing regiments of English militia to continue their farther services in Ireland, for a time to be limited, and to several other public and private bills.

Mr. WILBERFORCE then proceeded. He said he wished to draw the attention of the House to a subject which had once and again forced itself upon his mind, and been much in his thoughts ; it was a subject which nearly concerned the character and dignity of the House of Commons, and of every individual Member in it. Whether the matter which he meant to bring forward would lead to any motion, or farther measures, must depend in a great measure on the sentiments and wishes which other gentlemen might express, and the reception which the House would give to the remarks he wished to throw out. Mr. Wilberforce said, it was well known to be a standing order of the House to exclude strangers from the gallery, but this order had not been rigorously enforced ; and somehow or other, by the admission of strangers, or otherwise, statements had been made, even in the public newspapers, said to be the report of what passed within that House, but, in various instances which had come within his knowledge, they had given misrepresentations, and with an evident tendency to prevent and prejudice the public mind against the deliberations of Parliament, during the discussion of important measures. It became the House, therefore, seriously to consider whether it was not high time to take some measure calculated to meet the evil of which he complained, and to prevent the misrepresentation of gentlemen's speeches, tending

both to pervert the public mind, and to prejudice Members in the opinion of their constituents. For his own part, he entertained little doubt that the object of some of those parliamentary reports to which he referred, was to aim a blow at the Constitution, by means of an attack on the House of Commons and its Members.

If it was merely the case of an individual who had been thus injured, or of himself in particular, he confessed he should not think he acted with becoming propriety in taking up the time and attention of the House, by pressing this matter upon their consideration: but, for his part, he had thought for years past that there had existed a studied and wilful design to misrepresent, and even vilify the Members and proceedings of this House. He, for one, had been told, when in the country, that he had both spoken and voted differently from what he had done; at the same time he had the satisfaction to know, that any attempts of that kind, with respect to his sentiments or character, had not been successful—and he trusted that he stood as fair as ever in the esteem of his constituents. But the subject to which he alluded applied to the character of every individual Member; and he would repeat it, that he had heard persons in the country again and again express themselves with astonishment at the speeches and votes of Individual Members, to which they had been led by the misrepresentations which had gone forth in the public papers. Some of those vehicles had contented themselves merely with stating, that some honourable Member had made a very able or eloquent speech, whilst the speech of another, in opposition to it, had been given at great length; the evident design of this was to bias the public mind against their constituents. An evil of such magnitude was such as he thought should be remedied some way or other. He could not but be anxious, not only that his character, but that also of every honourable gentleman within these walls should be represented fairly. He was afraid that the misrepresentation of the proceedings of that House were wilfully given with a view to lower and stigmatize the House of Commons, its Members and proceedings. There never existed a time which discovered more evidently than the present, a design to aim a blow at the Constitution through the medium of an attack upon Parliament. He was far from objecting, nay he was willing and desirous that every thing transacted within that House should be fairly represented; but if it was found impossible to have this account fairly given, and that they could not adopt any measure to secure themselves from such attacks, it would then become matter for serious consideration whether the House should not say, either that what passed there should be fairly stated

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or not at all. On the one hand, he was unwilling, with a view of preventing misrepresentation, to shut up the door against all strangers, and on the other, he was desirous to have a fair statement of the proceedings of the House. He was undetermined whether he should make any motion on the subject, but he should consider of it, and whether an increasing evil did not call for a special remedy. Mr. Wilberforce said, that what particularly induced him to state this matter at present, was in consequence of a remark lately made by an honourable Member (Mr. Tierney), that on Tuesday last there were not above 36 Members met at four o'clock to carry through the new tax upon income, and from thence it was inferred that those who were for the bill were not very anxious in its support. He knew what effects such statements were likely to produce, from the venom of similar remarks formerly, which had diffused themselves through the community, and had produced very injurious consequences. He thought it therefore important to the character of Parliament that it should be known, that the reverse of this statement was the fact, and that it was because gentlemen were anxious and zealous in favour of this measure of finance, that they were not present before four o'clock; gentlemen generally came early when they meant to go away early; but, when they expected a late night, and intended to continue to the end of the business, it was usual for them to dine first, and finish the business of the day before they came down to the House; so that on Tuesday last, it was because they meant to attend the progress of the bill through the Committee that many gentlemen did not come to the House till a little after four o'clock.

He had thought proper, particularly, to notice this circumstance, because it was one, owing to which the character of the House had been maliciously traduced. It was for the House to consider what steps should be taken to remedy the evil of which he complained; as to himself, he had felt it a matter of the utmost importance to make the observations he had just thrown out.

No Member having arisen to say a word on the subject of Mr. Wilberforce's observations, the matter dropped of course.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the circumstances which at first rendered it necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act still made the continuance of this suspension so forcible as to prevent his enlarging on the subject, he would move, therefore, that leave be given to bring in a bill to continue the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act for a time to be limited.

Leave being given, Mr. Chancellor Pitt brought up the bill,

which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

Mr. WIGLEY wished a regulation to be introduced in the clause which respected the qualification of attorney's clerks, and that they might be allowed to enter, although they had not served five years to the attorney with whom they were first articulated, provided they had, with the consent of that attorney, served five years to another.

Mr. ROSE did not see that this proposition came within the meaning and design of the indemnity bill: he thought it better to be made the matter of a separate bill.

Mr. WIGLEY said, that undoubtedly it was an indemnity with regard to them; for, owing to a mistake of an act of Parliament, or through inadvertence, several gentlemen had served part of their time to another attorney, although with the concurrence of the gentlemen to whom they were first articulated.

Mr. Chancellor PITT thought it unfit that things of so different a description should be mixed together, and that it would be wiser that, adopting this regulation, it be an instruction to the Committee to divide the other matters introduced into the Indemnity Bill, and that this clause should be added to them.

Mr. SPEAKER said that there was a propriety in the remark, that different matters should not be introduced into one bill; he thought, therefore, that it should be an instruction to the Committee to divide the Indemnity Bill, and to confine the bill itself to those who have neglected to qualify according to the Corporation Act.

Mr. WIGLEY explained.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said he wished to divide all that had been introduced into the bill relative to the stamp duties, and to confine it to what related to the Test and Corporation Acts, which was a matter of public national policy.

Mr. WIGLEY then moved that it be an instruction to the Committee to receive a clause, "enabling the Judges to admit persons as Attornies who have not served five years to the Attornies to whom they were articulated, provided they have served five years to some other Attorney."

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that it be an instruction to the said Committee, that they have power to divide the Indemnity Bill into two bills.—Ordered; and the Indemnity Bill to be committed to-morrow.

The House then proceeded to the order of the day for the Committee for the farther consideration of the Income Duty Bill—Mr. Smith in the chair.

Mr. Chancellor PITT proposed a clause, purporting, that where a person delivered in a schedule upon oath before the Commissioners, that the inspector or surveyor should not have power in such a case to make an appeal to the Commissioners of Appeal, provided the first Commissioners were satisfied.

Mr. WILBERFORCE doubted whether this concession was not more favourable to the individual than to the public. He thought if no appeal from the first Commissioners by the Surveyor was allowed, that this would rather tend to cause the schedule of income to be more frequently called for.

Colonel MARK WOOD thought, that in cases where the Surveyors could not substantiate the grounds of an appeal to the Commissioners, that they should be liable to all the expences of such appeal.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL objected to this, and observed, that it was more likely that individuals would act dishonestly than that surveyors would act vexatiously. He hoped the House would do its duty, and see that the tax be imposed justly and equally, and not give way to a false tenderness or to clamour, and to the tendency of those speeches, which had for their only object, to make this tax unpopular. He wished, therefore, the clause, as it now stood, might not be expunged.

Mr. I. HAWKINS BROWNE was of opinion, that there should be an appeal from the first Commissioners to the Commissioners of Appeal, and that, not only on the behalf of the individual, but of the public. He thought an Inspector, in the lawful execution of his duty, deserved encouragement rather than discouragement; he therefore must object to the idea of his being obliged to pay the costs of an appeal, if that appeal should be unsuccessful; and he was of opinion that there should be an appeal, in certain cases, from the first to the second set of Commissioners.

Mr. TIERNEY said, the right honourable gentleman's amendment of the clause did not do away his objection to the Surveyor's having any right to make an appeal after the first Commissioners had decided on the tax to be paid. He felt himself bound to oppose the bill in all its parts. He denied what he styled the coarse insinuation of the honourable gentleman (the Solicitor General), that he was courting popularity. Were that his object, the most dextrous course he could take, would be for him not to interfere at all. But he was not sorry he had interfered as he had done; for what had been the consequence? He had brought the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) to his senses; and he now saw the necessity of introducing concessions, alterations, and amendments.

So far from being deterred from doing his duty by any such imputations, he found encouragement from what he had seen to-day, to persevere in making such remarks as was his duty.

The right honourable D. RYEER said, if any thing could induce him to oppose any modifications introduced after mature deliberations, it would be such affronting insinuations as those of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney), of his having brought his right honourable friend to his senses. By such language he was throwing the strongest temptations in the way of friends to the bill attending to modifications, to be told that they are brought to their senses, if either by any change of opinion, or acquiescence in the opinions of others, they proposed any modifications. With regard to the amendment, he was of opinion, that even though no appeal was allowed from the first Commissioners, after giving in a statement of income upon oath, yet there should be liberty of reference to the Judges, as the dernier resort in such cases.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that the honourable gentleman had said, that every modification proposed was to him and his friends so much clear gain; whilst he had told the House that he was against the whole bill, and that every modification was a weakening of the effect of the bill. As to the honourable gentleman's idea of clear gain by such modifications, he was in hopes he would be disappointed; but he evidently saw that the honourable gentleman was willing to heap upon the bill every degree of obloquy: but, perhaps, although contrary to his real intention, he might, by his opposition and speeches suggest some things which might tend upon the whole to make the bill more effectual in its operations; and he (Mr. Pitt) owned, that this was the chief revenge which he wished to be gratified in. He had had occasion to see a great many similar instances, when nothing had given more mortification and regret to those gentlemen, than when they found that the objections which they had thrown out had produced the tendency of strengthening a measure entirely the reverse of what they had intended. The honourable gentleman had talked of acquiring popularity by not interfering at all; he wished to know from what quarter he expected it? Would it, he would ask, be a recommendation to the People of England, and the best road to popularity, for the honourable gentleman to say, "I have been present at the discussion of a great measure; and I have withheld my opinion, either whether the measure was oppressive, odious, or practicable, which I could at the same time have opposed, and, perhaps, with success?" The honourable gentleman had taken to himself the merit of every amendment, by indirectly saying, "this is owing to what I have

said against the bill." He could not avoid remarking, that he had not heard from that honourable gentleman, or any other of his friends in Opposition, any remedy proposed to any objectionable clause. He rather supposed that they had studiously abstained from any suggestion which, as they thought, could produce a remedy. Mr. Chancellor Pitt denied that the amendment he had proposed was any departure from the spirit of the clause as it originally stood.

After Mr. Yorke, Mr. Vansittart, and others had spoken, the clause, with Mr. Chancellor Pitt's amendment, was carried without a division.

Some farther clauses and provisions of the bill, with some amendments made thereto, were then agreed to by the Committee.

That part of the schedule of the bill being read, which went to provide for the payment of a certain portion of income arising from lands *occupied by the owners thereof*, it was proposed by the rule, in such part of the schedule, that, in estimating the annual value of these lands, &c. the same, in no case, should be taken or reduced to *less* than the amount of one and a quarter year's rent, according to the rate at which such lands are *worth to be let* by the year, &c.

This provision it was proposed to amend, by the supporters of the bill, by adding, "or rated at higher than a year and a half."

The general principle of the rule in increasing the estimate beyond the bare yearly rent, met with a strong opposition from several gentlemen, and a desultory conversation of some length ensued.

Mr. Chancellor PITT defended the rule, as originally proposed in the schedule, and the amendment, with his accustomed ability. It was intended, he said, that a discretionary power should be vested in the Commissioners, to vary their calculations, according to circumstances, from a year and a quarter to a year and a half's rent; by this mode, the best under all the circumstances of the case that could possibly be struck out, the individual could be in no danger of being aggrieved, or the public of suffering.

Mr. WIGLEY spoke shortly in disapprobation of fixing the *minimum* in such a manner.

Mr. ELLISON contended for the difficulties which he conceived the Commissioners would labour, under such vague and indefinite rules for their conduct. He was confident that, in some cases, they must be at a loss how to act. He also begged simply to be informed how Commissioners could calculate, with any degree of precision, the value of lands so occupied.

Mr. Chancellor PITT acknowledged the difficulty of ascertaining precisely the annual value of such lands; but there were a variety of circumstances to guide the assessors—as the nature of the land itself, whether it was arable, or pasture, or what particular species it might be, the mode of cultivating the land by the occupier, whether with a view to profit or to pleasure; the opinion of persons of repute in the neighbourhood, respecting the real value of the land. In short, a variety of other ways, perfectly known to persons more conversant in these affairs than he could be expected to be.

Mr. BURTON and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL defended the rule and the amendment at some length.

Some farther objections being made to these, by gentlemen who opposed the bill,

Mr. Chancellor PITT contended, that the mode proposed by the amendment, of allowing the Commissioners discretionary power of varying their calculations according to circumstances, from a year and a quarter's rent as far as a year and a half, would be found infinitely preferable on experience, to tying the Commissioners down to a fixed limitation, or uniform standard, as pressed by gentlemen opposite to him.

The Committee divided, when there appeared, in favour of the rule amended as above, 48; Against it, 32. Majority, 16.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that on account of the length of the schedule, and the variety of amendments which were proposed to be offered, it would be impossible to get through the bill at any reasonable hour that night. He therefore submitted, whether it would not be the better way to direct the Chairman to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. BAKER took the opportunity to ask, what were the right honourable gentleman's intentions with respect to the arrangement of the future progress of the bill?

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that secondary to expediting a measure of so great importance, with all reasonable dispatch, his wishes were directed to the accommodation of the House. He imagined, that with a reference to the ensuing recess, gentlemen would wish rather to be detained a little longer than usual in town, even at this season of the year, than have an opportunity of visiting their country seats, and partaking of domestic enjoyments there, for a very short period, which must be the case, were the completion of the measure deferred until after the holidays. He had hoped the bill would have been perfectly gone through that night, in which case the whole, with the amendments, might have been printed without

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delay, given out to the Members, and the general subject taken into farther consideration on Monday next. His wishes were, however, as he already stated, keeping in view every reasonable dispatch to a measure of such importance, directed to the accommodation of gentlemen on these points.

A conversation respecting the future arrangement of the progress of the bill, between Messrs. Baker, Pierrepont, Tierney, Bragge, H. Browne, and Mr. Chancellor Pitt, then took place: the general result of which was, that the remainder of the bill, with the amendments, should be gone through to-morrow night; the report received, *pro forma*, that the whole should be printed, and delivered to the Members, with as little delay as possible, and the report taken into farther consideration on Wednesday next.

The Chairman left the chair, and, on the resumption of the House, reported progress, and the Committee was ordered to sit again to-morrow.

Friday, December 21.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee on the Indemnity Bill, Mr. Rose in the chair,

Mr. SPEAKER stated, that he had looked into the nature and practice of indemnity bills with great care since last evening, and was convinced, by the result of his inquiry, that it would be much more perspicuous and convenient, that all objects of the same import should be included in one bill: it would afford a clearer sort of relief, and would operate better for the protection of the subject, and the security of the revenue. He therefore recommended, that the Committee would not avail itself of the leave given them to divide the bill into two, but comprehend all the clauses under one bill. He conceived it would be the best mode of preventing mistakes and misconception.

Mr. WIGLEY concurred in this opinion; after which several clauses were received, granting indemnities to attornies' apprentices, whose indentures had not been stamped; to attornies who had not been able to enter their certificates in the different Courts, &c.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the second reading of the bill for continuing the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act.

Mr. TIERNEY observed, that when the bill for suspending the Habeas-Corpus Act was introduced in the last session of Parliament, grounds were stated for adopting it. This was not the case with the present bill, for the bringing forward of which no reason what-

ever had been assigned. Indeed he was at a loss to conceive what reason could be urged for continuing this measure. The right honourable gentleman had not thought proper to mention any: perhaps he thought the motives which ought to induce the House to agree to the bill were so obvious, that it was unnecessary to point them out. To him, however, they were not obvious; and until he heard some solid grounds stated for the measure, he must be excused if he withheld his assent from the bill.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he had stated yesterday, when he moved for leave to bring in the bill, that the motives which induced the House to adopt this measure last session still existed, at least the situation of public affairs was such as to demonstrate the policy and necessity of continuing it. This, he believed, was too obvious to require any illustration; but he must observe, that he neither was now, nor ever could at any other time be, at a loss to state reasons which, he was convinced, were more than sufficient to induce the House to continue the suspension.

Mr. COURTENAY said, he should take the liberty of stating a few words upon the question before the House. "Every Member in that House," he observed, "must venerate a law which secured the personal liberty of Englishmen—a law which every political writer has made the subject of his highest eulogium, and which has contributed so much to the prosperity and happiness of Great Britain. It is needless for me to urge to the House, that this great bulwark of British Liberty ought to be touched with a delicate hand, and that nothing but the most obvious necessity should be pleaded in excuse for its suspension. I cannot, therefore, give my assent to a measure, the object of which is to deprive the people, for a still longer period, of one of the greatest blessings handed down to them by their ancestors, which, while it is allowed to operate, affords personal protection to every individual, and which at one time rendered the liberties of this country paramount to those of any other country upon earth.

"We must admire," says an elegant and philosophical writer, Mr. Ferguson, "as the key stone of civil liberty, the statute which forces the secrets of every prison to be revealed, the cause of every commitment to be declared, and the person of the accused to be produced, that he may claim his enlargement or his trial within a limited time. No wiser form were ever opposed to the abuses of power." It is upon an institution like this that those Statesmen who wish to subvert liberty will naturally commence their attacks. It has often been assailed, and, as the same author well observes,—

'It requires a fabric no less than the whole political Constitution

of Great Britain, a spirit no less than the turbulent and refractory zeal of this fortunate people to secure its effects." I am much afraid that this turbulent spirit no longer exists: if it had, the honourable gentleman would not have been so successful in this measure.

But let us look at the effects which the suspension of this act has produced. A number of persons were arrested last year, I believe, not less than seventy or eighty: Has there not been time to bring them to a trial? To have arraigned and convicted these persons would, in my opinion, have been the best reason that could be urged for continuing the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act. Two terms have, however, elapsed without an attempt being made to try one of the persons who have been confined in consequence of the extraordinary powers given to the Executive Government. I should be glad to know what reason can be assigned for continuing this power any longer in the hands of His Majesty's Ministers. Has there lately existed any symptoms of rebellion, or have any insurrections taken place in any quarter of the country? On the contrary, I believe the right honourable gentleman opposite to me cannot point out any period since the Revolution, when more loyalty and more attachment to the Government was displayed than at present. It surely will not be pretended that we have now any thing to fear from invasion. The fleets of the enemy have been destroyed, and the country is covered with soldiers: I believe we have not less than between 2 and 300,000 men in arms. Now, under all these circumstances, protected by such a force, and by the general disposition of the people, no appearance of any attempt to disturb the internal tranquillity of the country, and secured against all dangers from without, why continue to suspend an act upon which the liberty of the subject depends?

There is another reason I shall state to the House why I think the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act ought to cease, and I state it upon good information. Indeed, if I did not think that I had important information to give, I should not trouble the House with any remarks on the subject. Was it not for this consideration, I should not have presumed to hold up my faint and glimmering rush-light, when the great and splendid luminary of Opposition is withdrawn. The reason is this; the persons imprisoned under the act, which it is now proposed you should continue, are most cruelly used. I do not assert this from hearsay, but from my own personal observation. Having heard a great many reports respecting their situation, I resolved to go and see them, and inquire into the fact. An honourable friend of mine (Sir F. Burdett) was rather cava-

lierly treated when he hinted at the situation in which these unfortunate men were placed, and I was resolved to ascertain the true state of the question. I procured an order from a Magistrate, and I went to see the prison, in company with my honourable friend and another gentleman, who is not a Member of this House, but who is distinguished by his humanity, and by relieving many distressed families of persons imprisoned under this act, on the information of spies. But I shall make no invidious observations on this subject. I ought to recollect, that I lately (in a high Court of Justice) heard an eulogium pronounced on spies and informers—who were hailed as the guardians of the State—as the tutelary deities of the Constitution. If they betrayed their former associates, treason was sublimed into loyalty, and treachery into virtue, as if poison could be medicated by additional venom.

I went to visit the prison, and I must confess that I found the reports that had reached me, of the situation of the persons under confinement, had been exaggerated—[A cry of “Hear! Hear!”] Yes, they were exaggerated; for had they been true, the cruelties exercised in this prison would have far exceeded any oppression that ever was committed under the horrible tyranny of Robespierre. Still, however, I must say, that their situation was extremely wretched, and the manner in which they were treated unexampled in severity and rigour. I found them without fire and without candle—denied every kind of society—exposed to the cold and rain, which in that inclement season (it was about a month ago) entered by the iron bars of their cells—only allowed to breath the air out of their cells for about an hour—denied every comfort, every innocent amusement—excluded from all intercourse with each other, and each night locked up from all the rest of the world. Now I appeal to the gentlemen who hear me, whether they could have imagined that such a practice existed in this country, and whether they think that there was any necessity for treating State Prisoners in this manner.

I do not believe that His Majesty's Ministers were privy to those proceedings. I cannot suppose that the usage these unfortunate men experienced was known to any person in Administration; but the severity they experienced was greater than I can describe it, and such as, for the sake of humanity, and the honour of the country, I should hope will not again be permitted. Among the prisoners, I saw a gentleman, with whom I was acquainted above thirty years ago; an officer distinguished in the service; and amiable in his character and manners—I mean Colonel Despard. I am happy, however, to state, that I understand his situation has since been

ameliorated. I am told he has lately been put into a room with a fire; and this change, I am informed, he owes to the humane interference of Mr. John Reeves. Till the 25th of last month, he was confined in a solitary cell, where even his wife was not allowed to visit him, though we were. These cells are so cold, that at this season of the year, it is scarce possible to exist in them. The cold may, in some degree, be tempered by closing the wooden shutters; but if the unhappy prisoner wishes to be cheered by the air and the light of heaven, he must admit the rain and chilling blasts of Winter at the same time. This usage appeared to me so extraordinary, that I was at some trouble in inquiring of several gentlemen, eminent in the profession of the law, if ever they had known of such practices in this country. They uniformly answered, that they never had heard of such severity; that they considered the treatment I had described to be altogether unprecedented; and that they could not imagine that any men were used in such a manner in this country.

I suppose it is scarcely necessary to inform the House, that the prison of which I have been speaking is that which is commonly called the Bastile. [*A cry of "Hear! hear!"*] Do gentlemen doubt it? I can assure them it is very well known by that name. When I took a coach in Oxford-road, in order to visit the prison, I desired the coachman to drive me to the *Bastile*. "Very well, Sir," was the answer I received. Being curious to know whether he really understood the place I wanted to go to by this name, I said "You know it then?" "O yes, I know it—why every body knows the Bastile in Cold Bath Fields." Indeed it is not surprising that such a name should have been given to this prison, for when another Bastile formerly existed under a certain *regular Government*, which some gentlemen pretend very much to admire, State Prisoners were treated better there than they have been treated in this. Perhaps it may be inquired under whose direction this prison is placed. I understand that some reverend gentlemen are among the Magistrates who manage it. Gentlemen of whom I do not mean to speak in any way resembling terms of disrespect. I dare say they act from the purest motives. Perhaps they kindly subjected these prisoners to so much pain in this world, that the less punishment might be inflicted on them in the next. [*A cry of "Hear! hear!"*] Well, if this motive does not please gentlemen, I cannot help it. Let them assign a better if they can, and I shall give up this; but I assure them it is the best I can think of.

But it is not to persons suspected of state crimes alone that the rigour I have described is extended. Many other persons, charged with offences of various descriptions, undergo the same treatment. A

man sentenced to imprisonment for selling a pamphlet called the Rights of Citizenship, has been confined in one of these cells. His name is Smith. Now I should be glad to know whether this is the mode in which a man convicted of a libel ought to be punished. To be separated from his family, and shut up in an ordinary gaol, during the time of his sentence, one would think a sufficient execution of the sentence; but under this regimen the culprit was not only prevented from exercising his industry to support a wife and children, but his health is destroyed, and perhaps his mind deranged, for it would not be at all surprizing if persons in such a situation were afflicted with insanity. I must not, however, omit to state, that this poor man was some time ago, in consequence of indisposition, removed from his cell, and placed in the sick ward, and, as the time of his imprisonment is nearly expired, and the sending him back to his cell might occasion a relapse, he is, I understand, to be allowed to remain in the sick-ward until he is discharged. I am happy to have an opportunity of noticing this act of humanity. The next person whose case I shall mention is that of a disorderly woman, as she was called, that is, one of those unfortunate creatures who walk the streets. She was not convicted of any felony, but she was confined in a cold damp cell. She was at the same time ill of that disease with which women of the town are pretty frequently afflicted. I leave it to the humanity of the House, whether it was proper to place this poor unfortunate woman in a situation, which, added to the virulence of her disorder, was likely to endanger her life. In another dismal cell I found a boy, confined there for disobedience to his master, a punishment which I believe was never before heard of for an offence of the kind.

Such were some of the spectacles I witnessed on this visit. I have, however, no doubt that any abuses which may exist will be corrected when they come to the knowledge of His Majesty's Ministers. Indeed I am informed, that the state prisoners are now removed into a warm room, where they have free intercourse with each other, and that they are rendered as comfortable as a situation of confinement will admit; but what I have stated to the House is sufficient to shew that my honourable friend was not misinformed when he hinted that the state prisoners were improperly treated. For a complaint of this kind, I sincerely believe, there can only be a foundation when the circumstances are unknown to His Majesty's Ministers. State prisoners are more particularly under their care, since they are confined in consequence of warrants from the Secretary of State; there can, therefore, be no doubt but that Ministers are desirous they should not be treated with any unnecessary severity.

With regard to any farther arguments that I might be able to urge against the bill, as they would perhaps have little or no weight with the House, I shall therefore forbear to state them; but I cannot conclude without lamenting that an honourable gentleman, celebrated for his humanity, has not visited this prison. I am convinced that honourable gentleman's principles of *Vital Christianity* (principles which indeed I have read in his book) would have induced him to exert himself to ameliorate the condition of these unhappy people. I am certain, however, that the honourable gentleman will not any longer suffer it to be said by the unfortunate, "I was, in prison, and you visited me not." I wish the honourable gentleman had been with me when I went to see this prison. I am certain that his feelings would have been greatly affected, and then his eloquence in describing them would have been much superior to any thing the House has yet heard on the subject.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS observed, that the question before the House was, whether this bill should now be read a second time or not? The honourable gentleman who had just spoken had stated a number of facts, whether they were faithfully stated or not, they certainly had no earthly connection with the bill now before the House. They related to the supposed bad conduct of this gaol, and they might as well be said to be aimed at the supposed badness of gaols in general throughout this kingdom, but had nothing whatever to do with the power which the Legislature had given to the Executive Government of this country, and to continue which for a limited time was the object of the bill now before the House. From this view of the subject he was perfectly at liberty to draw this conclusion, that with all the humanity which the honourable gentleman had displayed to-night, he believed every particle of it would have remained at rest if the bill now before the House had not been moved; it was this bill that caused the honourable gentleman to summon up the humanity of the House. If this bill had not appeared the humanity of the honourable gentleman would have reposed under a dead silence; for if the case were otherwise, why did he not exhibit his complaint long ago? The points which he urged to-night having no earthly connection with the bill before the House, might as well have been urged at any other time, or any other occasion, as the present. Indeed the matter was of sufficient importance to be brought forward specifically if the honourable gentleman should think fit to do so. To all he had said this night there was this general observation to be applied—If there existed any abuse in the management of any of the gaols of this kingdom, there was an easy remedy—there was not one of them

that was not either under the care of a Sheriff or some Magistrate or other. If, therefore, the honourable gentleman was led from general humanity to pity the condition of all prisoners, or was led from sympathy to deplore the condition of those who were accused of sedition, his course was to have gone to some Magistrate with his complaint. If he thought, however, that the bad conduct of gaols was so general that no remedy could be effectual but a general motion upon the subject in that House, there was nothing to prevent the honourable gentleman from bringing forward any motion he should think necessary upon the subject. If the honourable gentleman had any thing to urge against Government on account of the separate confinement of any prisoners, or on any other account, let the honourable gentleman make his accusation, and then some one or other of His Majesty's Ministers might, perhaps, endeavour to answer him; but it was surely not enough to throw out the bill which was now before the House, that the honourable gentleman should alledge that some prisoners had been ill treated. The honourable gentleman had given to the House a facetious account of a hackney coachman, who might have learnt, from a dialogue of two or three gentlemen whom he carried, to call this prison a *Bastile*. He dared to say that a shilling would satisfy a hackney coachman that any prison in the kingdom ought to be called a *Bastile*, provided the gentleman who gave him that shilling should be pleased to call any prison by that name. That appeared to him to be the history of this same witticism of the hackney coachman who had the pleasure of driving the honourable gentleman to the prison in question: but none of these things were reasons why the House should now withhold the power which the Legislature had so recently thought wise to entrust to Executive Government. In order to shew that this measure ought not to be now continued, the honourable gentleman should shew that there now did not exist any treasonable seditious spirit any where in this country. Did he mean to say there was nothing of that kind discovered at Maidstone? Upon one fact the honourable gentleman would agree with him—That at Maidstone there was only one man convicted of high treason, and that there were four acquitted: but he hardly believed that at this time of day it would be seriously contended, that because a man had been acquitted of high treason, it must be considered as a proof that he never had been guilty of high treason. He had heard doctrine to that effect maintained in that House, but he hoped he should never hear it again. It was not, however, on the guilt of one or two individuals that this measure before the House was founded; it was founded on a conspiracy and combination of per-

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sons acting in concert at home for the destruction of the state, and whose views extended also to a concert with the enemies of this country abroad whenever any act for that purpose could be attempted with the hope of security to its projectors. This, indeed, was now become rather a forlorn hope; for persons with such intentions could have but few to listen to their plans, for, thank God, the eyes of the people of England were pretty well opened: but their suspicions of the intentions of some few among them were not yet entirely gone. Under a conviction of these points he appealed to the House to say whether they thought they ought now to withdraw the power which prudence had induced them to grant to the Executive Government.

Mr. COURTENAY wished to explain one circumstance alluded to by the honourable gentleman. It certainly was his intention to have communicated the information he had that night stated to the House, as soon as possible after he himself became acquainted with the facts; but he did not think that this could be so regularly done until the list of the persons' names, moved for by his honourable friend, had been laid upon the table; and the House would recollect that it was no sooner brought up, than the right honourable gentleman gave notice of his intention to move for leave to bring in a bill for continuing the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. It appeared therefore to him, that the best opportunity he could then take for bringing forward the facts he had stated, would be some time in the progress of that bill.

Mr. TIERNEY hoped that the House would indulge him with the liberty of saying a few words upon the question now under discussion. He had given his vote for the bill of last session, and he should wish to shew that he did not act inconsistently in opposing the present. His reasons for this difference of opinion were shortly these. Last session a message was brought down from His Majesty, stating, that there was imminent danger of an invasion, aided by disaffected and treasonable persons in this country, and a bill of indictment had been found by a Grand Jury at Maidstone, against five persons for high treason. Combining these two circumstances together, it was impossible for him to deny that a case was made out, which warranted the temporary suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. The situation of the country was now, however, completely altered. No one who had read the King's speech at the opening of the present session, could suppose that His Majesty's Ministers had now any apprehension of an invasion. Then, with regard to correspondence with the enemy, he had heard of none carried on from this country. There was, however, proof of correspondence with

Ireland ; but he learned from the same authority upon which he admitted this fact, that there was no connection between the societies existing in Ireland and those in Great Britain, and that any improper correspondence that might have passed between the two countries must have been through individuals only. He had a right to maintain that this fact was proved, for if the authority he alluded to was to be relied upon in one case, it was equally good in the other. The number of persons who had been arrested in consequence of the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act, had been stated to be between 70 and 80, who were now all discharged, except a few, and these were not brought to trial, though detained in confinement since last April. This seemed to indicate that there was not much reason for continuing the measure, and it certainly was but fair that some new motive should be shewn before the House was required to agree to the bill. Whether his conduct had been right or wrong in voting for the bill of last session, it was evident that reasons were then adduced for the measure, which were totally wanting in the present case. It had been said that the observations of his honourable friend, relative to the usage of the state prisoners, had no connection with the bill ; he, however, thought that they were very much in point. They tended to shew the manner in which the powers given by that bill had been exercised, and deserved the particular attention of the House. It appeared that those who were taken up under the act were not confined in the usual manner of persons merely suspected of an offence, but that they were treated as if they had been convicted of some great felony. He knew that very considerable differences of opinion prevailed among Magistrates relative to the utility of solitary confinement ; but he never yet heard its warmest supporters say, that an Englishman, who had been convicted of no crime, should be confined in one of those cells. He trusted that the House would feel the importance of preventing in future such an improper abuse of power. They had heard the extent to which it had been carried. A man of rank, a Colonel in the army, was among the persons his honourable friend had stated to be treated with so much inhumanity. Whether he should derive popularity or unpopularity from his vote on the present occasion, he should give it as he gave the former, conscientiously. He saw no ground for continuing the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act. It was possible there might be a few lurking traitors in the country ; but there was throughout all England a general spirit of loyalty that would render it impossible for their arts to succeed. The right honourable gentleman opposite to him had, with all the eloquence for which he was so conspicuous, described this spirit in the most glowing

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colours. He then cordially rejoiced with His Majesty's Ministers, and none were more happy than he was to behold this spirit. With regard to French principles, he should have thought that they would have by this time ceased to give alarm. There was little danger to be apprehended from that quarter. He believed the delusion of French principles had no longer any effect even upon the most illiterate persons in the country. The French Directory had done more to disgrace their principles than all the bills ever brought into Parliament. For these reasons he could not agree to suspend the liberty of Englishmen any longer.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL said, there was nothing he so much regretted as his not being present when the last honourable gentleman but one spoke. He was desirous to hear the opinions and sentiments of every gentleman on this question, and did hope, that every mind disposed to candour would receive such impressions from the remark it was his intention to make, as would lead to a conviction of the falsehood of most of those charges which had been alledged against the officers of Government, and of the necessity of continuing in the hands of His Majesty's Ministers, the power they derived from the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act. Before he proceeded to state the reasons upon which was founded his decided approbation of the measures pursued in consequence of suspending this act, he thought it not inconsistent with his duty, and not unconnected with the present discussion, to remind the House of what an honourable gentleman, who appeared to consider it his duty to absent himself from Parliament, not long since said of the manner in which libels are punished by the laws of this country. That honourable gentleman, at a time when the state of Europe was very different from what it is at present, thought fit in a public situation to say, that the punishment for this offence is particularly severe; and as this reflection involved the Court of King's Bench in a very serious manner, he had been led to examine its records, to trace the history of its proceedings in this respect. The result of his inquiries authorised him in distinctly affirming, that never since the law took cognizance of libel were the sentences of the courts less rigorous and severe than for the last six years. When libel was far from being systematic, in other words—before the circumstances of this offence were so much aggravated by the indiscriminate abuse of every personage and institution in the country, that instead of being grossly calumniated deserved to be revered and praised, the law of libel was administered with a severity unexampled in our days. If gentlemen would only take the trouble to compare the sentences of the Court of King's Bench passed in the

period he spoke of with those of any other period since the revolution, sure he was that it would be seen the judges of our time, without neglecting their duty, had much softened the character of punishments in general, and that the punishment for libel in particular was not sufficiently severe. Formerly the practice had been for the Attorney General of the Crown to direct the punishment when persons were brought up for judgement, but he had acted upon a sentiment of a distinguished and infinitely able lawyer, the Attorney General of a distant period, whom he then regarded with affection, and still revered and valued—he meant my Lord Thurlow. This great man was the first who disused the immemorial practice of directing punishment; and if the tempered and mild judgements of the court did not wholly arise out of this circumstance, certainly much kindness and lenity succeeded it. Would gentlemen contend that the libels of the present day less outrage decency, and less offend against the laws? Let them look to the state trials of the year 1794. In those trials they will find that public meetings were in many places held for the purpose of propagating sedition: that not merely the Ministers of the Crown were libelled, but every institution religious, political and moral, with every individual, in whatever conspicuous situation in the administration of the laws or the Government of his country he may have been placed. [*A cry of "Hear! hear!"*] Gentlemen might attempt to embarrass him by their interruptions, but he would repeat it. There were at the period he alluded to, Corresponding Societies and Corresponding Clubs, instituted and affiliated, not for the purpose of making the Members of that House responsible for their conduct, or to procure a constitutional reform of any abuses supposed to have entered into the practical part of Government, but for the purpose of destroying that House—of erecting a Convention on its ruins, of subverting and overthrowing the Government, and in its stead to introduce the wild and graceless system of a neighbouring country. It could not be, that gentlemen approved of those proceedings; and yet what was there peculiar in their character but those features he had just described: and did not the leaders of disaffection, the members and agents of the Corresponding Society, justify every libel, and encourage every outrage on the character and conduct of Parliament and the Crown? But to speak more immediately to the question before the House. What truly was the case of Mr. Smith, of whom in strains of lamentation an honourable gentleman had said so much? Why this—he had been Secretary of the Corresponding Society; certainly it might not be illegal to have been so, but it was no high proof of loyalty in any man. He had published libel upon libel,

and if, libel upon libel passed the law, able gentlemen executed? it only perusal anarchy, cred, he tions and traduced up to rise His Majesty's Constitution enjoyed invoked i read the mons to King's which examining all could proceed It was the aspect of occasion: that how discuss sentence acts of perfect shews of the Mr. C to censur Speak opportu man c He said justly a King's ing too

and if, as perhaps was his duty, he had prosecuted him for every libel published at his shop, no single life could have longevity enough to pass through the series of the years of imprisonment to which the law in its wisdom would have consigned him. Did the honourable gentleman ever read the book for which this man was prosecuted? It had suited his purpose indeed ludicrously to mention it only as a pamphlet called the Duties of Citizenship. But the perusal of it would have taught him to consider it as inculcating anarchy and treason. He would have found that every thing sacred, honourable, and good, in the nature and character of institutions and men, is there blasphemously and wickedly libelled and traduced. He would have found religion and its Ministers held up to ridicule; the law and its officers misrepresented and vilified; His Majesty upon the Throne mentioned with contumely; and that Constitution under which so many and such exclusive blessings are enjoyed, made the constant theme of rude, unfounded, and unprovoked invective. It was the honourable gentleman's duty to have read this book before coming down to the British House of Commons to reflect on the sentence and proceedings of the Court of King's Bench. No man could completely judge of the mode in which the officers of the Crown performed their duty, without examining with great care the ground they proceeded on, and least of all could the honourable gentleman completely judge of the kind of proceeding against Mr. Smith without reading the book alluded to. It was not merely his own character that he sought to rescue from the aspersions and reproach of the honourable gentleman on this occasion: he owed it to the Court of King's Bench, thus to remind that honourable Member, that it is a delicate subject at any time to discuss the nature and circumstances of verdicts of Juries and the sentences of Judges, but to comment without discrimination on the acts of a Court of Law, to comment on legal sentences in a state of perfect ignorance of the circumstances under which they are passed, shews not less of temerity than want of candour, and in any crisis of the affairs of a country not only unkind but inflammatory. [Here Mr. Courtenay attempted to explain, that he was far from meaning to censure the sentence of the Court of King's Bench. But the Speaker called him to order, informing him, that he would have an opportunity of explaining after the honourable and learned gentleman concluded his speech.] The Attorney General proceeded. He said he could believe the honourable gentleman meant not unjustly and indiscriminately to asperse the character of the Court of King's Bench or its Judges, but might not he be deceived by trusting too implicitly to information loosely and inauthoritatively con-

veyed to him, and come down to that House without giving the subject that deliberate consideration it was entitled to? With respect to the proceedings against Mr. Smith, and his treatment since his confinement, he could assure the House nothing severe or harsh was done on the part of Government or its officers. That prisoner could not but remember with how much readiness Government allowed the State Prisoners in 1794, every indulgence suited to men in their situation that was consistent with the measures taken for their safe custody. And here he could not help remarking, that the charges against them were of the most serious nature. A charge which if not supported by proof of legal treason, most certainly the evidence given on the trials fully shewed that there did exist grounds of accusation, for never in the world was a conspiracy against a Government, and for the subversion of all order and all law so clearly unfolded, and the intentions of the men who composed it, so manifestly wicked. If gentlemen would but cast a glance back upon this memorable æra, they would perceive that the accused were not only treated with kindness, but he must think with too great lenity: and had Mr. Smith made any representation to the Secretary of State of unnecessary rigour or unmerciful treatment, he was sure it would be attended to. No such representation was made, and he was free therefore to conclude there existed no grounds for reasonable complaint. On what an honourable gentleman had thought proper to say of the prison, by them called the Bastile, he must be permitted to make a few observations. It was reserved for our time, for the beneficent and moderate age of philosophy and the rights of man, to call those places Bastiles, which were instituted for the imprisonment of the offenders against this law. Would gentlemen look a little at the origin of this kind of scandal, and at the kind of persons by whom it is used; it claimed close kindred with the revolutionists of France, for our prisons were first called Bastiles by the orators of Copenhagen House and Pancras Fields, who used it not only in their public harangues, but in confidential letters, so that we trace it most distinctly to the hot-bed of anarchy; and now it is only used by persons willing to propagate French principles, and destroy the English Constitution and the English Government. And he most sincerely believed, that at the moment he was speaking, had not the Legislature passed the acts so much inveighed against by this kind of people, we should not have that Constitution to which an honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney) had that night professed his attachment; and for himself, instead of being occupied in the discharge of his duty, he believed he would not be in old England, nay, not any where; so malignant and destructive would

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have been the operation of the new-fangled doctrine. But to return to the case of Smith.

An honourable gentleman had particularly alluded to the proceedings in Court, and one circumstance he would mention which must, in every impartial mind, produce entire conviction that nothing could be more remote from the wish of the noble Lord who presided there, than unnecessarily to treat prisoners with rigour. When it was known to the Court that Smith had made a representation of the severities of his confinement, my Lord Kenyon, a Magistrate of great firmness, directed an inquiry into the truth of the case, and the result was, that the Governor of the Prison, and the Physician, both testified that it was a proper place of confinement, and that every possible degree of attention was paid to the health, &c. of the prisoners. If, however, it could be proved that since the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, that in a few cases persons were treated with severity; nay, if even there existed many cases of this kind, much as he must lament it, it would not be sufficient to sensible minds not to suspend the act. He did not know who were the visitors of places where suspected persons are confined, he believed they were many of them of high character; but surely they might have inquired of the Sheriffs concerning the truth or falsehood of the representations of prisoners. Had gentlemen done so, they would have found that it had been attempted to impose upon them, and the House would never have heard the accusation of that evening. He had himself been applied to by some of the State Prisoners; but understanding that they were associated, and kept a shop for the sale of books filled with all kinds of wickedness, books that no man would have dared to sell any where else, and for which they had been separated, he referred them to the Sheriffs, who soon afterwards informed him, that they had done whatever was necessary. An honourable gentleman had pleased himself by relating an anecdote of some coachman; but when gentlemen went in coaches to the Bastile, it might be asked, "Do they employ themselves properly when there?" It must be evident their inquiries are misguided, and their results such as do not by any means justify the tone in which gentlemen accuse Government of want of lenity. Had they pursued the inquiry in a proper manner, the Sheriffs must have been applied to, and other persons examined whose local situation renders their information indispensable to a conclusive opinion. If the Sheriffs were found to blame, it would be a grave point to proceed upon; but nothing of this sort was alledged. Here he mentioned the State Trials at Maidstone, and reminded Mr. Tierney, that his vote for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus in the

last session was given, because the Grand Jury had found a bill of indictment for high treason. The parties were tried, one was found guilty, the rest were acquitted; but after what had passed in Ireland, was it not now evident that all were implicated in a design to invite France to the invasion of England—to favour the invasion of Ireland? Gentlemen might say the evidence against these men was collected from spies; but it must be remembered, that this description of persons is always the more calumniated as they speak truth. Ministers would not be justified to let the Government take its chance against internal traitors, by not taking measures of safety on the evidence of such men. Talking of the United Irish, he observed, that United Irishmen could make United Britons; and if as a Society they did not correspond with Societies here, as individuals they propagated their mischief. An honourable gentleman might, if he chose, slander the Administration of this country and its measures, by comparisons with the Government of France and its conduct. But would gentlemen reflect on the close alliance in principle between the United Irish and the French: that, like them, they had their Executive Directory, that in that there was a Government within a Government, seeking the ruin of their country, but audacious enough to promise the deluded people of Ireland succour from the sale of the estates of the Gentry of Ireland? Under these circumstances, it was necessarily his duty to support the motion.

Mr. COURTENAY spoke shortly in explanation.

Mr. BURDON said, that no one could fairly suppose that a House of correction, built after the plan of the philanthropist Howard, was deficient in whatever would tend to the health and advantage of those in confinement; and when the thickness of the walls and the structure of the building were considered, he must conclude that it was wholesome, and in every respect fit for prisoners to be in. When he went to visit it, so far from perceiving the parties sent there by warrant from the Secretary of State to suffer by any rigorous confinement, he saw them walking about with each other, and perfectly undisturbed. They had the means of enjoying both air and exercise at proper hours; nor had they any reason to complain as to the means of subsistence, having an allowance from Government of 13s. 4d. a week. Since the time that they had more liberty allowed, they had been the means of interrupting the tranquillity of the other prisoners, and of promoting confusion, which visitors had seen reason to regret. He had attended there as a Magistrate for the County, and had witnessed the greatest regularity and propriety in the management of the prisoners; and he was

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persuaded that any person, who would venture to assert the contrary, would feel the accusation they brought fall upon their own heads. For his own part, his mind was so satisfied on the subject, as well as from what he had heard so ably stated by the Attorney General, that he was determined to support the motion.

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT said, that it certainly was the interest of Government acting under the law for the Suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act, that those men who were taken up should not be more severely treated than the circumstances required, and more severely than he thought that men convicted of the crimes laid to their charge should be treated. Upon the subject of that treatment it certainly was important that there should be no exaggeration. He was convinced, however, that great severity had, in some instances, been used. The honourable gentleman who spoke last might not, in walking round the gallery in the prison, have observed any symptoms of this, and in looking into the cells he might not perceive any offensive smell, and might see that the place was clean washed. Was it considered, however, what must be the situation of a cell seven feet square, after a person had been in it some hours, or when persons were confined for many weeks without being permitted to go out but for a few minutes to wash themselves? In these calls there was no wood nor paper to keep the person confined from the contact of the wall; and in wet weather, or after a frost, it was evident that a brick wall must be so damp as to be extremely insalutary where no fire was allowed. He agreed, however, that these matters were not strictly in point on the consideration of the bill before the House. The future opportunity might occur for that discussion, and, perhaps, he might feel it necessary to move an inquiry on the subject. It was the duty of the House to take care that the extraordinary powers which it granted should not be abused; it was in its power to grant such an inquest as was necessary for that object, and it would be its duty to grant it, should there be reason to think that oppressions had been exercised. The learned gentleman opposite to him (the Attorney General) had defended the proceedings of Government, and the judgements of the Courts of Law in cases of libel. Certainly, however, that matter was not connected with the present subject, nor had it any thing to do with the treatment of persons taken up under the act for suspending the Habeas Corpus. There was a case of great hardship, of which he had been informed. A number of persons were brought up to town from Manchester: they were loaded with irons; in this situation they travelled, and when they arrived, they were lodged in the Correction House in Cold-bath Fields. From

the effects of travelling in this state, their legs were very much swelled, and when lodged in the prison, the Bow-street officers ordered the irons to be knocked off, which was then a very painful operation. They then were thrown into places quite unprepared for their reception, and next day taken before the Privy Council. They were exposed to great inconvenience, as, though several of them were manufacturers, they had no opportunity of giving directions about their affairs, nor of obtaining redress, as nobody was permitted to see them. Now, however, he understood, that the situation of these persons was much improved, and that they had all the accommodation of which their situation would admit. Objections had been taken to the word Bastile. Certainly that word was employed merely to denote a prison; as to any comparison with the Bastile under the old Government of France, that was not the question; for whatever might be thought of a power in any Government to arrest without any cause, and to detain for an unlimited time, it was generally admitted that persons confined in the Bastile had every accommodation which a state of confinement allowed. As to the bill before the House, no grounds had been stated for it, much less was there any cause for the precipitation with which it had been hurried on. He had come down yesterday to state his reasons against it, but he found that, at a very early period of the evening, it had been disposed of. It was a measure, however, which demanded all the attention of the House; it was more important than any measure of finance could be, inasmuch as men's persons were of more consequence than their property. He was the more surprized at this, because when he made his motion for a list of persons taken up under the act for suspending the Habeas Corpus, to which the right honourable gentleman had thought proper to agree for reasons of his own, and not for those which were stated in support of it, a kind of threat was thrown out that a renewal of the bill would be moved, and that the right honourable gentleman should then unfold the dangers with which the country was threatened, and bring forward the proofs of the conspiracies which had existed. No ground had, in his opinion, been stated on which the House could surrender so important a bulwark of the liberties of the subject.

Mr. SPEAKER—I wish to set the honourable Member right. The bill was not hurried through the House, for a notice of a motion for leave to bring it in was given some days before by the Secretary of State, and it was not till after the House had gone through some public business, being near five o'clock, that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) brought in the bill.

Mr. SCOTLAND instances had; but I have heard of no cause for complaint made, had no matters connected with the bill brought to court for consideration similar to this view, Such conduct Baronet has taken. He (the Secretary) and been charged and taken sufficient reason. This was in times of great occasions.

The bill of the reign of George III. was exposed, and persons connected with legal evidence were sent to the Jury to find out if it was renewed to the first persons, against danger was feared. I left the year 1715. in Ireland of United States to fuse itself which, from over the charge of to establish Societies &c.; and VOL

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL said, that if there were any instances of improper treatment, the means of redress were to be had; but it was fair to infer, that where no grievances had been heard of for any length of time, that probably there was no just cause for complaint. But whatever complaints might have been made, had ceased, under proper representation. He thought such matters could not be urged now with any serious view of opposing the bill before the House, but rather from calumny, and a wish to court popularity. It had become a frequent method of late to hold out every measure brought forward on his side of the House as similar to the conduct of Robespierre; and he suspected that, with this view, the term *Bastille* had been applied to the New Prison. Such conduct was both ungenerous and culpable. The honourable Baronet had demanded on what grounds this motion was supported? He (the Solicitor General) should have thought that what had passed and been disclosed at the late trials at Maidstone, as well as what had taken place in the neighbouring country of Ireland, were sufficient reasons for the House continuing the measure proposed. This was not a bill of novelty; it had been repeatedly adopted in times of danger, not only in the present reign, but on former occasions.

The bill for suspending the Habeas-Corpus Act originated in the reign of King William, in consequence of dangers to which he was exposed, and which would have made it necessary to bring to trial persons conspiring against his Government, had it not been that such legal evidence of their guilt was wanting as would have induced a Jury to find them guilty. In the year 1715, when this suspension was renewed, the most salutary consequences had followed. Owing to the firmness of Government in apprehending a number of persons, against whom no legal charge was brought, and who, after the danger was over, were dismissed, the safety of the country was ensured. This precaution having been omitted in the year 1745, left the country in a much more dangerous state than it was in 1715. Whoever had impartially remarked what had lately passed in Ireland, as well as in this country, must have seen that the society of United Irishmen was that which enabled the conspiracy to diffuse itself, till at length it burst forth in acts of open rebellion, and which, from the very plan of these societies, drew a veil of secrecy over their proceedings, which made it difficult to bring home a charge of guilt upon individuals. Strong attempts had been made to establish similar societies in this country—Hence Corresponding Societies had been established with their Executive Committees, &c.; an *imperium in imperio* had been introduced, which was

nothing else but a germ of treason and rebellion, which, if not timely nipped in the bud, would soon have discovered itself in a more open form. Now such sort of treason was not easy to be brought home to the conviction of a Juryman, because actual treason was concealed in the matter that was to bring it forth; and it was with great difficulty that minds not habituated to consider the subject with the greatest attention, could be led to see the danger that surrounded them. Thus in Ireland, under the pretence of Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform, nothing less than the separation of Ireland from England, and the erection of the former into an Independent Republic, was the object aimed at. So here, the pretence of a Reform, &c. had been assumed; but would gentlemen say that this was a cloak that concealed nothing? The Executive Government assuredly would not have done its duty, had they not made use of all lawful means to thwart the designs of persons who had engaged themselves in such combinations, and to break the strength of such confederacies; and if they had not made application to Parliament to give them that power to effectuate the purpose which was the object of the present bill to impart—a bill which had been formerly used with success upon former occasions. And nothing having been urged to shew that this power had been abused, he thought it was the duty of the House to empower Ministers to take the measures necessary to be adopted for the safety of the country.

Mr. MAINWARING said, that as he was in some degree implicated in what had been said on the subject of the treatment of the State Prisoners, it was to be observed, that the Correction House in Cold-bath Fields had not been established for any such purpose as that for which, in the present situation of affairs, it had been found necessary to employ it. With regard to its management, he could say, that there were none of the abuses stated. The keeper of that jail was a person of great humanity and attention to his duty, and every care was exerted for preserving the health and comfort of persons confined. He was sure that there was not a more comfortable place of the kind in the whole country, or one in which, in proportion to the numbers confined, there was less sickness. Every thing was provided for the State Prisoners in the most liberal manner. He did not know to what the honourable Baronet (Sir Francis Burdett) had alluded, when he said, that the prisoners were out only for a few minutes; they were out every day for several hours, and he now understood that they were allowed to be all together in the same room. Of the propriety of such an indulgence, he was not called upon to say any thing; but if he had been consulted as a

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Mr. W fentation h that it shou it had been be removed friend of h made to g Opposition which were enable him ceedings of soners, wi had not ha been occup He had no by his frie in clearing He was af ing the fit there as w ing any pa to examin of the pris ing on the here, and some gent by the pru been recla good beha The char nature, it ment coul persons ta to prevent had comm his right l diately at more dire prisoners.

Magistrate respecting such a thing, he should have considered it his duty to refuse it. Unquestionably great misrepresentation must have been given of the state of persons confined in this prison, and the manner in which it was regulated.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that as a great deal of misrepresentation had arisen upon this subject, it was extremely important that it should be fully explained, and that the false impressions which it had been attempted to make on the minds of the public should be removed. A day or two ago, he had received a letter from a friend of his, informing him, that certain representations had been made to gentlemen in this House, commonly called Members of Opposition, respecting the situation and treatment of State Prisoners, which were very likely to be incorrect. His friend, therefore, to enable him to judge of the subject, had sent him minutes of the proceedings of the Magistrates who superintend the conduct of the prisoners, with remarks on the state of the prison; to this subject he had not had an opportunity to turn his attention, as his mind had been occupied with the important plan of finance before the House. He had now, however, revised the documents and observations sent by his friend, and they would be found to be of great importance in clearing up the subject of the treatment of the State Prisoners. He was astonished at what the honourable Baronet had said, respecting the situation of the prison in Cold-bath Fields; he had been there as well as the honourable Baronet, not for the purpose of visiting any particular persons there, or on the spur of the occasion, but to examine the general state of the place, and to view the situation of the prisoners. He had likewise been in the habit of corresponding on the subject, before there was any idea of its being agitated here, and the accounts he had heard were very different from what some gentlemen had stated to-day. He had been informed, that by the prudent regulations which then prevailed, several persons had been reclaimed from habits of vice and idleness, to industry and good behaviour, and had been restored to society as useful subjects. The charge which had been made, was certainly of a very serious nature, it was no light thing, to say, that the Executive Government could be so malignant, as to exercise any severity against the persons taken up, farther than was necessary for safe custody, and to prevent them from tainting the minds of those with whom they had communication in confinement. It was a charge either against his right honourable friend, or against the noble Duke, more immediately at the head of this department; or against those who were more directly employed in the custody and superintendance of the prisoners. The latter were persons who in their station were no

less respectable than his right honourable friend and the Duke of Portland, and who must equally feel for their character; nobody imputed to his right honourable friend, or to the noble Duke, any particular inclination to rigour, and the Magistrates to whom the superintendence of the prison belonged, were therefore implicated if any extraordinary severity was exercised. From the documents of his friend he was enabled to lay before the House a great deal of satisfactory information. It was proper in the first place to observe, that the regulations which prevailed in this prison were many of them founded upon the principles recommended by the excellent Mr. Howard, and superintended by several persons who had an active and laborious share with that benevolent character in his inquiries upon this subject. Different boards existed to superintend the regulations and to receive information respecting the state of the prison. One of these boards met at least once a week, and the minutes of their proceedings would be found to contain much matter which would throw light on the present question. As he was reading the account of the prison in these documents, and heard the representation given of it, he could not conceive any contrast more striking. It reminded him of the story in "Joseph Andrews," of the different remarks which were made by two travellers in a stage coach on the character of a gentleman whose estate they passed. One said that he was the best husband and farther, the most generous friend, that existed. The other, who had been asleep during this panegyric, awoke, and remarked the fine estate they passed, and lamented that it belonged to such a rascal. Parson Adams, in the simplicity of his heart, concluded that the gentlemen must have been speaking of different persons; and when he himself compared the representation of the honourable gentlemen with the documents before him, he was almost tempted to think that gentlemen on the other side could not be talking of the same person. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the account which his friend gave of the state of the prison, as to the health and treatment of the prisoners. The gentleman who wrote the letter, a respectable Clergyman, stated [here Mr. W. read several extracts] that he had seen the food intended for the prisoners, which consisted of as good legs of mutton and pieces of beef as he had ever seen at his own table; that the utmost cleanliness prevailed throughout the place; that of the number of which the prison contained at any one time, which was two hundred and forty, the sick were only three, and the deaths for the whole year only two, though if the situation of many of the persons when they came in was considered, the place rather resembled an hospital than a prison. The minutes of the sittings of the Magis-

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trates, to which he had alluded, would serve to shew what had been the conduct of some of the prisoners, and the necessity there was to watch them with care. It appeared in these minutes that it was stated by the Chaplain that two of the persons confined in this place, Burkes and Smith, had behaved so ill at church, had so openly expressed their contempt of the worship, that he proposed that their attendance should in future be dispensed with. These minutes likewise contained the message of Lord Kenyon on the occasion alluded to by his learned friend (the Attorney General), and testified his Lordship's approbation of the conduct of the Magistrates, and the management of the prison in the highest terms. It was so very important, now that the subject was under discussion, that the misrepresentations which had gone abroad should be thoroughly corrected, that he hoped the House would forgive his dwelling upon it with some minuteness of detail. What then was the situation of the facts in the case. On the one side there was the evidence of the minutes of the proceedings of the Magistrates in superintending the state of the prison, and on the other, the accounts which gentlemen had received from the parties themselves. They had proceeded to inquire into the situation of the parties confined in the same manner as Don Quixotte examined the galley slaves on the crimes which had reduced them to that situation, and no doubt the one as well as the other would endeavour to represent themselves as suffering without just cause. If, however, the evidence of the parties themselves was to be taken, it would be necessary to take their evidence both ways. Mr. Smith's authority was quoted for the hardships he suffered; it would be necessary then, as sometimes was seen in law cases, to produce Smith *versus* Smith. It appeared that Smith himself entertained no great idea of the motives which induced some gentlemen to interest themselves about him, and imputed it rather to a wish to bring the matter as a motion before the House of Commons than from any regard to him. It appeared also, that though Mr. Burkes, in an intercepted letter, complained that he was dying for want, the minutes of the Board stated that on his coming before them, they found it necessary to recommend to him cleanliness in his person. The same Smith too, in a letter to his wife, stated that he was in a better situation than she could imagine, that he reflected against the use that had been made of some things he had stated, and particularly disapproved of the comments of those who filed the prison a *Bastille*. All these facts and confessions clearly proved that the honourable gentlemen opposite had been imposed on, and that, from too credulously listening to the information they received, they had brought a serious

charge against a very worthy and honourable set of Magistrates. This instance, however, should not only teach gentlemen not to take up their opinions so lightly on such subjects, but it ought to teach the public to distrust representations given on such partial authority. It was of great importance that false impressions should not be given; for it was extremely difficult to root them out. To prove afterwards that they were false does not correct the evil they have produced, or serve as an antidote to the poison they have diffused. The credulity of the honourable gentlemen themselves could not be accounted for but in this manner; after what they have said, too, of the dangers which threatened the country—after conviction had flashed on their minds from what had passed here and in Ireland, it was matter of wonder that they were not overwhelmed with remorse and confusion for what they had formerly maintained; it was matter of surprise that their minds were steeled against the incontrovertible evidence of facts, and it could only be imputed to the early bias their minds had received. For his own part, he trusted that he was not the last to feel what was due to suffering, but at the same time there were feelings of another kind which ought not to be overlooked. He never could forget the saying he had read early in life of that great and good man Lord Hale, an ornament not only to the profession of the law, but to his country. When asked how he felt when he pronounced sentence of death on a criminal, he replied, "That he felt for the situation of the prisoner, but he felt likewise for the country." He begged leave to recommend the example of Lord Hale to gentlemen on the other side of the House. They seem to be tremblingly alive to the situation of those who were taken up on suspicion of the greatest crimes; but they did not seem to be alive to the danger of the country. They ought not to be so ready to lend themselves to those who abused their credulity.

There was another point on which he felt himself obliged to make a few remarks. He had often heard things which had been said with much mirth and pleasantry here, which were afterwards repeated with most mischievous consequences elsewhere. An honourable Baronet talked of the Bastiles which were erected in this country. The practice of giving these names, however, was of the most pernicious tendency. Every one must recollect, that those who had formed themselves into societies in this country for the purpose of following in practice what they admired in France, adopted the names of every custom and establishment to which the new state of things in that country gave rise. These men acted well and wisely for the purposes they had in view. They were wise children in

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their generation. They knew, that if they could bring the names into use, they would prepare the way for the things. Shakespeare, the great master of the human heart, in his play of King John, represents the fondness of the mother as dwelling on the pretty words of the child——

“ Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
“ Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
“ Repeats his pretty words, puts on his looks.”

So these gentlemen might have used these “ pretty words,” and put on these “ pretty forms,” in order to shew their affection for French principles. He did not much like a ludicrous story, but as it tended to illustrate a serious argument; he remembered, however, an election in a large city, where several persons came to the poll, and voted for Citizen such a thing, and against the other Candidate, who was a banker. Some of the mob proposed that they should go and sack the Bastile, and let out the guineas, from a confinement more rigorous, probably, than that which an honourable Baronet had described to be the imprisonment of the old Bastile. Gentlemen might thus see in what light their metaphors may be taken up, and with what purposes they may be connected. With regard to the measure before the House, there was ground enough for the understanding of every man who impartially viewed the state of the country, and recollected late events. Those who have thought that there was danger; who think still that the danger is not entirely over, would not relax their efforts, or deprive the Executive Government of those means by which they had been enabled to provide for the safety of the country. He was happy that the present opportunity had occurred of removing the false impressions which had arisen on this subject, and he hoped that those gentlemen, who must see they had been deceived, would come forward and confess that they had advanced this very serious charge without sufficient grounds. It ought never to be forgotten that men, who expose themselves to suspicion, must often incur the disadvantages of guilt. Men, therefore, should be cautious how they gave occasion for suspicion. The safety of the State required that we should regard it no less than the case of individuals. It was a false compassion which felt only for individuals' hardships, and was callous to the general dangers of the country.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR said, when he came down to the House he had no idea that the debate would have taken the turn it had. The great thing was, that every idea of the prisoners being ill treated was entirely removed; and he had no difficulty in stating,

that His Majesty's Ministers had, as far as he was able to judge, exercised the discretion entrusted to them in as kind and as tender a manner as possible. When he meant to suggest doubts respecting the propriety of suspending the Habeas-Corpus Act, it was on this ground, that a case had not been made out so strong as to induce him to support the motion. Would it not be a prudent measure to send to a Select Committee the grounds upon which Ministers conceived that a suspension ought to take place? After paying a compliment to the mildness and moderation with which the Attorney General discharged the duties of his office, he said, that in the prosecution and punishment of libels there had been no harshness. He also thought it right to say, that libels had been circulated with a view to gain men from their allegiance. As to Citizen Smith and others, he had seen most of their publications, and more diabolical ones, in his opinion, never existed. But still there was in the hands of the Attorney General the power to prosecute, and in the hands of the Court the power to punish; he therefore conceived that there were not grounds for the suspension of the act. When it had last been suspended, there existed a dread of invasion, and then it was right to adopt such a measure; that dread, however, remained no longer.

Mr. ELLISON said, he should certainly give his vote for the bill, because he thought the circumstances of the country rendered it necessary to vest those powers in the Executive Government; and he was the more inclined to support it, because it was admitted on all hands, that the powers with which Ministers had been already trusted, had been well exercised. He had no doubt but that if statements could be obtained from every Magistrate in the kingdom, it would appear that prisoners of every description were treated with humanity. He had himself the honour of acting as a Magistrate in two counties, and as far as his observations extended, he could make that assertion without the danger of contradiction. He knew perfectly well that the jails were inspected regularly by the Magistrates, who did not walk through the jails with the cold feelings of jailers, but they went to see that the prisoners had proper accommodation and good treatment—to see that they were employed in work, and that they were not allowed to drink too much. He wished the honourable Baronet, who seemed to think the prisoners were treated with severity, would assist as a Magistrate in the county in which he resided, and then if he saw any improper practices, he would have an opportunity of correcting them.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL explained: he said, the honourable Baronet seemed to suppose that his object, in supporting

the measure. So far from considering this as an act of being involved gentlemen, whether—

[Here nation.]

Mr. Attorney General said, that the state, that the prisoners in prison, and that they had been suffering.

Mr. Attorney General said, which he had said, he could not, in the public mind, was now present, to prevent it. He had no restraint, and he was for parting with liberty.

Mr. Attorney General said, House to the House. He thought of the employment of the prisoners, he could not do so. The Habeas-Corpus, it was said, the powers with which they were entrusted, they thought they were not.

Mr. Attorney General said, Mr. Attorney General said, that the Magistrate who had been appointed, the unfortunate character, while he was in the quarters, its foreign, could not be so strongly maintained by the system which was in safety, had to destroy talking of,

the measure, was for the purpose of keeping men in confinement. So far from being influenced by such an unworthy motive, or considering the measure as an act of severity, he really looked upon it as an act of mercy, being done with a view to prevent others from being involved in the same situation. But he would put it to gentlemen, and he would call upon them conscientiously to declare, whether——

[Here the Speaker said he should confine himself to explanation.]

Mr. Attorney General subjoined, that he was going merely to state, that the trials at Maidstone, and the confinement of those now in prison, arose from the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act having been suffered to expire.

Mr. Alderman COMBE thought that five-and-twenty men, which he believed was the number now in prison under the act, could not, if let loose on society, do any harm in the present state of the public mind. The spirit of the country had been tried, and was now proof against every effort of such a body to poison or pervert it. He therefore could not consent to the continuance of this restraint, as, from the state of the country, he saw no necessity for parting with what he considered the great bulwark of our liberty.

Mr. WESTERN said, that as no grounds had been stated to the House to shew the necessity of this measure, he could not support it. He thought there never was a period in which the domestic safety of the empire was in less danger than it was at present. But though he could not consent to the renewal of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, it was not because he thought Ministers had misused the powers with which they had been entrusted; on the contrary, he thought they had used them with great moderation.

Mr. Chancellor PITT perfectly agreed with a worthy Magistrate who had spoken very lately in the debate, that a great and fortunate change had taken place in the situation of the country; but while he expressed the warmest satisfaction at hearing it stated from all quarters that the situation of this country, both with respect to its foreign and domestic affairs, had been so greatly improved, he could not but remind the House, that this change, which was now so strongly felt, and so universally acknowledged, had only been obtained by the adoption of those measures, by a perseverance in that system which some of those gentlemen who now exulted in our safety, had represented as calculated to produce disaster abroad, and to destroy the Constitution at home. He had heard gentlemen talking of, and reprobating the treasonable attempts of men, inti-

mately connected with the avowed and implacable enemies of the country—attempts which the unremitting vigilance of Government had detected and frustrated. He had heard gentlemen speak in terms of the highest congratulation at the fortunate escape of this empire from the united efforts of foreign hostility and domestic treason; but he recollected, that when His Majesty's Ministers were looking at those dangers in prospect, which were acknowledged now that they were passed—when they were calling upon Parliament to adopt measures to avert them, they heard from the same quarter not only a bold denial of their existence, but repeated and inflammatory statements of every topic which ingenuity could suggest, as calculated to awaken public jealousy, and to prevent Parliament from investing Government with those powers, which it was now admitted had been so beneficially and so moderately exercised.

If the situation of the country was so changed, it was a proof of the mistaken opinions of those gentlemen, a proof in addition to those arising from circumstances still fresh in their memories, and to which it was not necessary for him more particularly to allude. If the measures which had been adopted by the wisdom and firmness of Parliament had answered the ends for which they were designed; if they had rescued the country from those dangers which were now no longer represented as imaginary, surely it was a most singular argument to say, that at the moment in which they were mutually congratulating each other upon the advantageous change which had taken place in our affairs, they ought to select that moment to throw away those very means by which that advantage had been obtained. Did the honourable gentlemen think, that because hitherto we had, by the wise and vigorous measures we had adopted, so fortunately escaped the perils with which we were menaced, that they might now with safety abandon their efforts, and relax their precaution? Did they suppose, that if exulting in the idea of conscious security, they were to sink into inattention and supineness, that these dangers might not again occur? Had these gentlemen read so little of human nature—had they seen so little of it in its most perverted and deformed state, in the shape of modern Jacobinism? or had they collected so little from their observation, as not to know, that though Jacobinism might be curbed and repressed, yet while the principle remained unextinguished, its efforts would not cease? Jacobinism, to all that was detestable and abhorrent to every moral and religious idea, added one quality which increased its malignity, and that was an incorrigible obstinacy, a wicked determination to be influenced by no arguments, to be convinced by no facts, which led its professors to persist, if not openly, at least unremittingly, in their profe-

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cution of their atrocious designs. But that perseverance which in a bad cause was wicked obstinacy, in a good one was highly commendable. He therefore hoped, that the Parliament of England would not shew less perseverance in the defence of the innumerable blessings we enjoyed, than the Jacobins did in their efforts to destroy them.

The People of England had learnt enough of the nature of Jacobinism not to know, that while the principle of it existed, the most unremitting vigilance and the greatest firmness were necessary to oppose it. They had learned, that they ought never to be for a moment off their guard, while they had among them men whose activity was unceasing, who never walked, who never slept without a dagger by their side; they were convinced that until the weapon which threatened their existence was annihilated, the shield which protected them could not be laid aside.

This was the answer he should give to those gentlemen who thought present security a ground for future negligence. He trusted that the success that had hitherto attended these measures would be an argument for their continuance. The only other point on which he wished to say a word, lay in a very narrow compass. An honourable gentleman (Mr. Taylor) had suggested the propriety of appointing a Secret Committee, to inquire into the necessity of continuing the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. That honourable gentleman seemed to him to have displayed more candour in his speech than he had in the conclusion which he had come to, which he could only account for by supposing that the honourable gentleman spoke from his own feelings, but voted with his company. But the honourable gentleman seemed to have no doubt, that if a Secret Committee had been appointed, their report would leave no doubt of the propriety of adopting this measure: if then the honourable gentleman was sure that their report would have justified the suspension, it was a fair inference to say, that they had that honourable gentleman's authority for saying, that the situation of the country required the measure. It was upon this very principle that he moved for leave to bring in this bill without making any preface. It was because the propriety of the measure was too obvious to render proof necessary. What farther proof could be necessary after they had seen what passed in Ireland, when they knew the designs of the enemy, and that their hopes of success against us were founded upon the chance of finding some fortunate moment to assist our domestic traitors, when they knew that it was through the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, that the plans of those traitors had been detected, whose confessions seemed to have made such a change in gentlemen's

opinions—when they knew all those circumstances, they must feel that there was no necessity for a Secret Committee to examine evidence to prove the expediency of the measure. A time might, and he hoped would come, during the present session, when, through the medium of a Secret Committee, the public might be put in possession (as far as was consistent with safety) of many circumstances, of which they now could have no conception—Circumstances, which would more fully display that system of treason which had been carried on, and which would display those links by which Irish traitors were connected with traitorous societies in this country. But at present he should be ashamed to think that they should have recourse to a Secret Committee, to justify them in adopting a measure, of the expediency of which they were at this moment so perfectly convinced. Those inquiries to which he had alluded might, at another time, and for another purpose, take place; but in the mean time, gentlemen were not to suppose that those facts did not exist, because they were not now brought forward.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR explained, as did Mr. Alderman COMBE.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that the right honourable gentleman had now let the House into his intentions: it now appeared that this suspension was to be made into a system. He said, the right honourable gentleman had unjustly charged him with having always represented that no danger existed, whereas he had last year voted for the suspension of this bill, on the ground of his apprehension of danger.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he did not allude to the honourable gentleman in particular, but to other gentlemen with whom he used to act, and who had uniformly held the language he had described.

The House then divided—For the bill, 96; Against it, 6. Majority, 90.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS rose to move for a bill for granting benefits to volunteer corps, which were embodied not merely for the defence of one spot, but whose services extended to the district in which they were. He said there was one duty which he had been anxious to perform, and no time seemed more fit for it than the present, and that was, to make the acknowledgements of the country to the country, for the unequalled zeal and energy which it had manifested. The House could not but recollect, that about twelve months ago the country was, he would not say in a panic, but certainly in expectation that the enemy would make an attempt to invade this country. The period he alluded to was just after the rup-

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ture of the negotiations at Lisle. The whole of the force which at that time existed in this country, amounted in infantry, in regular militia, volunteers, &c. to 84,000 men; the cavalry, regulars, volunteers and yeomanry amounted to about 20,000, making the whole number of armed men in this country at that time 104,000. But in consequence of the threats of the enemy, the people of England felt that they ought to teach the enemy, that any attempt to invade this country would be followed by the total destruction of the invaders, and the mode which Englishmen took to teach that lesson to the enemy, was to put themselves in a posture of the most complete defence. Since that period, out of the force which he had mentioned, about 2,000 men had been captured at Ostend, who, having effected the purposes of the expedition, had been prevented by the weather from re-embarking. Besides these, a body of 5,000 men had been sent to India. It had been judged right to send 3500 upon a secret expedition into the Mediterranean. In addition to all these, this country had spared no fewer than 25,000 men to the assistance of Ireland, making together a body of above 35,000 men out of the 104,000 he had mentioned. He had now, however, the happiness to state, notwithstanding so large a body had been sent out of the kingdom, that this country was, by the most unparalleled exertions, protected by the zeal and courage of 240,000 men in arms. If the country remained true to itself—if it kept up that zeal which it had hitherto displayed, he would announce with confidence, that it would remain in a state of impregnable security. He stated this with the sincerest satisfaction, and he considered it as a proud day for England that he was able to state it. That we were in this proud situation was due to the People themselves—to them alone the merit belonged. They had shewn by their conduct that they were determined to protect their Constitution and those laws under which they had enjoyed so much happiness. He had said, we were in a state of *impregnable security*; he would not have used such strong words, if he had not considered the nature of the force by which we were defended. Protected as we now were, he certainly looked upon the idea of invasion with derision. But he wished no man to infer from his present security, that the continuance of his zeal and of his exertions were not necessary.

At present every part of the country was amply supplied with forces to resist any attempt which the enemy might venture to make. This was the state of the remoter parts of the country—In the Southern district there were above 32,000 men, under the command of that able veteran, Sir Charles Grey. In the Eastern

district there were no less than 80,000 men, under the command of another most able General. Besides these, the forces were arranged in such a manner, that in two or three days time, the forces in these districts might be augmented by above 20,000 men. This was the situation of the country with respect to its defence. The country was determined to remain free, and it rested for defence upon its own spirit and determination. When upon former occasions he had moved for some of the bills for arming the people, some gentlemen expressed a little alarm at putting arms into their hands. He said then, what he was convinced was true, that by far, very far the greater body of the people were sound: and besides, he knew that the best way to make men feel a love for their country was to put them in a way to defend it. He was sure that at the time this system of arming began, many men had not the same feelings which they had now; but by having the means of defending the country put into their hands, they had learnt to value it. This had contributed much to that fortunate and happy change upon which they congratulated each other. He concluded with moving, That leave be given to bring in a bill for exempting persons serving in volunteer corps from being balloted for the supplementary militia under conditions.

Honourable E. BOUVERIE expressed a wish that care should be taken that this bill did not interfere with the supplementary militia.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG thanked the right honourable gentleman for the compliment he had paid the country. He then described a corps to which he belonged, and which he thought entitled to the exemptions which the right honourable gentleman had proposed.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that from the description which the honourable Baronet had given of the corps, he supposed it would fall within the exemptions.

Leave was then given to bring in the bill, and Mr. Secretary Dundas and the Secretary at War were ordered to prepare and bring in the same.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of the bill for taxing income in an equal manner, Mr. J. Smith in the chair.

The 10th, 11th, and 12th clauses were read and agreed to, after some amendments in different rules, in the discussion of which Mr. Chancellor Pitt, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Simeon, and Sir W. Geary, took part.

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The rule respecting the criterion of estimating the income of farms was the principal topic to which the attention of the Committee was directed, and it was agreed that the income should not be taken at less than one-half, or at more than two-thirds, where the rent was under 300l. nor at less than three-fifths, or at more than three-fourths, where it exceeded 300l.

When the 13th clause came to be considered, Mr. Chancellor Pitt, after a few words from Mr. Wigley, proposed, in consequence of the lateness of the hour, that the Committee should defer the discussion, and report progress. The House being resumed, progress was accordingly reported, and it was ordered that the Committee should resume the farther consideration next day.

Mr. HUSKISSON brought up the bill for exempting certain volunteers from serving in the militia. Read a first, and ordered to be read a second time next day.

After some short observations from Mr. Chancellor Pitt, Mr. Wigley, and the Speaker, respecting the printing of the report on the bill for a general tax upon income, and the consideration of it on Wednesday next, the House adjourned.

AN ACCOMPT of all ADDITIONS which have been made to the Annual Charge of the PUBLIC DEBT, by the Interest or Annuities of any LOAN that hath been made, or ANNUITIES created, subsequent to the passing of an Act 27 Geo. III. Cap. 13 ; as required by the 72d Section of the said Act : and also, of the Produce of the several DUTIES, granted for defraying the Charge incurred in respect of the same ; in the Year ended the 10th Day of October 1798.

An ACCOMPT of all ADDITIONS which have been made to the Annual Charge of the PUBLIC DEBT, by the Interest or Annuities for or on Account of any LOAN which hath been made, or any ANNUITIES which have been created, subsequent to the passing of an Act of the 27th Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, intituled, " An Act for repealing the several
 " Duties of Customs and Excise, and granting other Duties in
 " lieu thereof, and for applying the said Duties, together with
 " other Duties composing the Public Revenue ; for permitting
 " the Importation of certain Goods, Wares, and Merchandize,
 " the Produce or Manufacture of the European Dominions of
 " the French King, into this Kingdom ; and for applying cer-
 " tain unclaimed Monies remaining in the Exchequer for the
 " Payment of Annuities on Lives, to the Reduction of the
 " National Debt."

By virtue of an act 29 Geo. III. the sum of 187,000l. was raised by annuities, after the rate of 7l. 9s. 9d. per cent. per annum, for the term of $18\frac{3}{4}$ years; from the 5th of April 1789, and then to cease ; which annuities were directed by the said act to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain annuities granted by two acts of the 18th and 19th years of the reign of his present Majesty, payable half-yearly at the Bank of England, and charged upon the consolidated fund ; the amount whereof, with the charges of management for the same, for the year ended the 10th of October 1798,

By virtue of one other act of the same session, the sum of 1,002,500l. was directed to be raised by annuities on lives, with the benefit of survivorship, distributed into classes, and to be paid at the Exchequer, and charged upon the consolidated fund (but by certain persons neg-

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lesting to complete their whole payments a deficiency was occasioned, whereby the sum on which the annuities were granted amounted to the sum of 1,002,099l.) part of which said annuities, by an act of the 30th year of his said Majesty's reign, were converted into annuities for a certain term of $69\frac{1}{4}$ years, from the 10th of October 1790, and were directed by the said act to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain annuities granted by two acts of Parliament of the first and second years of the reign of his present Majesty, and several subsequent acts, payable at the Bank of England, viz.

The charge for the annuities on lives,
payable at the Exchequer, or one
year, from the 10th of October 1797
to 10th October 1798 —

£.	s.	d.
42,861	1	0

Whereof has been reserved at the Ex-
chequer for the use of the Public,
and carried to the consolidated
fund, in respect of the nominees ap-
pointed by the Com-
missioners of the
Treasury, for the
quarter ended the 5th
of January 1798

£.	s.	d.
12,205	0	10

Reserved also at the Ex-
chequer, to be carried
to the consolidated
fund, for the quarter
ended the 5th of July

1798	—	—	12,196	3	4	
			24,401	4	2	

Whereby the charge to the Public is
reduced to — — —

18,460	16	10
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The charge for annui-
ties and management,
payable at the Bank of
England, for annuities
to continue $69\frac{1}{4}$ years,
for one year, ended
the 10th of October
1798

£.	s.	d.
24,639	7	2

The charge incurred by
George Atwood, Esq.
inspector of Tontin
certificates, to defray
the expence attending
the execution of the
above-mentioned acts
of Parliament —

700	0	0
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The charge for the
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the clerk of the Pells,
for their service in
executing the said
acts, for one year,
ended the 10th Octo-
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£. s. d.
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The charge for neces-
saries furnished by the
Usher of the Ex-
chequer to the officers
for managing these
annuities - - -

£. s. d.
420 8 9½
26,639 15 11½

45,100 12 9½

Surplus of this fund for the year ended the 10th of
October 1798 - - -

59,259 15 7½

57,721 13 5

116,981 9 0½

An ACCOMPT of the Produce of the Duties imposed for the Purpose of defraying the increased Charge occasioned by the ANNUITIES granted in pursuance of the following Acts, viz. An Act of the 29th Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for raising a certain Sum of Money by Way of Annuities;" and of one other Act of the same Session of Parliament, intituled, "An Act for raising a certain Sum of Money by Way of Annuities, attended with the Benefit of Survivorship, in Classes;" Part of which Annuities were, by an Act 30 Geo. III. Cap. 45, converted into Annuities for an absolute Term of Years, viz.

	£.	s.	d.
The produce of the additional duties on horses, granted from the 5th of July 1789, for one year, to the 10th of October 1798	20,028	19	8
Ditto of the additional duties on carriages, granted from ditto, for the same time	15,983	6	9½
Ditto of the additional duties on newspapers, granted from the 1st of August 1789, for the same time	30,518	4	7
Ditto of the additional duties on advertisements, ditto	11,202	14	0
Ditto of the additional duty on cards, ditto	4,890	9	0
Ditto of the additional duty on dice, ditto	177	15	0
Ditto of the duties on legacies or shares of personal estates, ditto	4,632	0	0
Ditto of the duties on probates of wills, ditto	29,548	0	0
	116,981	9	0½

By Virtue of an Act 33 Geo. III. the Sum of 4,500,000*l.* was borrowed for the Service of the Year 1793; the Contributors whereof were entitled, for every 7*l.* contributed and paid, to 100*l.* Capital Stock, after the Rate of 3*l.* per Centum per Annum, amounting to 6,250,000*l.*, and to be added to, and made One Joint Stock with, the 3*l.* per Centum Annuities, consolidated by Acts 25, 28, 29, 32, and 33 Geo. II., and several subsequent Acts, and to commence from the 5th of January 1793.

The charge in respect of the same, for one year's annuity and management, amounts to	—	—	£.	s.	d.
			190,312	10	0

In pursuance of an act 32 Geo. III. cap. 55. directing the one-hundredth part of any loan or capital stock created after the passing the said act, there is set apart at the Exchequer, in respect of the said capital of 6,250,000*l.*, and issued quarterly to the Bank of England, to be by them placed to the account of the Commissioners for reducing the National Debt, the annual sum of

62,500	0	0
252,812	10	0

An ACCOMPT of the Produce of the DUTIES directed by an Act 33 Geo. III. to be applied in Aid of the Consolidated Fund, in respect to the Charge thereupon by the Annuity and Management on 6,250,000*l.*, payable out of the said Fund, viz.

The produce of the additional duties on British spirits continued by the above-mentioned act, in the year ended the 10th of October 1798	—	—	£.	s.	d.
			86,949	0	0

Ditto of the additional duties on foreign spirits, continued by ditto, for the same time	—	—	130,514	0	0
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217,463	0	0
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Deficiency of this fund to answer the charge	35,349	10	0
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252,812	10	0
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By Virtue of an Act 34 Geo. III. the Sum of 11,000,000*l.* was borrowed for the Service of the Year 1794, upon the following Terms, viz.

The contributors to be entitled, for every 100*l.* contributed and paid, to 100*l.* capital, at 3*l.* per centum per annum, to commence from the 5th of January 1794, to be added to, and made one joint stock with, the 3*l.* per cent. annuities, consolidated by acts 25, 28, 29, 32, and 33 Geo. II. and several subsequent acts; which for one year, ended the 5th day of July 1798, with 4,950*l.* per annum for management, amounts to

£. s. d.
334,950 0 0

And to an additional capital of 25*l.* at 4*l.* per cent. per annum, to commence from the 10th of October 1793, making a capital stock of 2,750,000*l.* to be added to, and made one joint stock with, the capital stock of 4*l.* per cent. annuities, established by two acts of the 21st and 22d years of the reign of his present Majesty, and several subsequent acts; which for one year's annuity, together with 1,237*l.* 10*s.* for charges of management, due 10th October 1798, amounts to

111,237 10 0

And also to an annuity of 11*s.* 5*d.* per cent. on the said 11,000,000*l.* to commence from the said 10th of October 1793, to continue for the term of $66\frac{1}{4}$ years, and to be added to the joint stock of annuities, which by two acts of the 1st and 2d years of the reign of his present Majesty, were granted for 99 and 98 years, from the 5th of January 1761, and the 5th of January 1762 respectively, and then to cease; which annuity for one year, together with 706*l.* 8*s.* 1*½d.* for charges of management, due 10th of October 1798, amounts to

63,498 1 5½

In pursuance of the act 32 Geo. III. directing the one-hundredth part of any loan or capital stock created after passing the said act, there is set apart at the Exchequer, in respect of the said 11,000,000*l.* in 3*l.* per cent. annuities, and issued quarterly to the Bank of England, to be by them carried to the account of the Commissioners for reducing the National Debt, the annual sum of

110,000 0 0

And in respect of the capital of 2,750,000*l.* in 4*l.* per cent. annuities, created by the said act 34 Geo. III. the farther annual sum of

27,500 0 0

And also in respect of the future annual value of the annuities granted for $66\frac{1}{4}$ years, at the end of 45 years, the farther annual sum of

9,680 0 0

By two acts 34 Geo. III. for granting annuities in lieu of Navy and Victualling Bills, such proprietors of Navy and Victualling Bills as were made out on or before the 31st of

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March 1793, who should deliver up their bills to be cancelled, were to be entitled, for every 100l. contained in such bills, to a capital of 101l. in annuities, at 5l. per cent. per annum, to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain 5l. per cent. annuities, established by two acts of the 24th and 25th years of the reign of his present Majesty, and to commence from the 5th of January 1794, whereby an addition was made to the said capital stock of 5l. per centum annuities, granted by the said acts 24th and 25th Geo. III. of 1,926,525l. 12s. 5d. The annuity payable for the same, together with 866l. 18s. 8½d. for management, for one year, amounts to — — —

£. s. d.
97,193 4 3½

In pursuance of the above-mentioned act of the 32d Geo. III. directing the one-hundredth part of any loan or capital stock created in respect of the said act, there is set apart at the Exchequer, in respect of the said capital of 1,926,525l. 12s. 5d. and issued quarterly to the Bank of England, to be by them carried to the account of the Commissioners for reducing the National Debt, the annual sum of — — —

19,265 5 0
116,458 9 3½
773,324 0 9

Surplus of this fund for the year ended the 10th of October 1798 — — —

167,019 12 1¾
940,343 12 10¾

The Produce of the following DUTIES, granted or continued by fundry Acts of Parliament of the 34th Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for defraying the increased Charge on the Consolidated Fund by Annuities, &c. established by several Acts 34 Geo. III. for One Year, ended the 10th Day of October 1798.

	£.	s.	d.
The net produce of the additional duties on British spirits, granted from 21st February 1794	87,655	0	0
Ditto of the additional duties on foreign spirits, granted from ditto	127,235	0	0
Ditto of the stamp duties on indentures of clerkships to solicitors and attornies, granted from the 5th of February 1794	16,760	1	4
Ditto of the additional duties of excise on bricks and tiles, granted from the 28th of March 1794	48,760	0	0
Ditto of the additional duties of customs on bricks and tiles, granted from ditto	167	9	4
Ditto of the additional duties on glafs, granted from the 17th of April 1794	43,569	0	0
Ditto of the duties on slate, stone, and marble, granted from 5th July 1794	13,657	18	6
Ditto of the duties of excise on distilleries, and on licences to distillers in Scotland (after deducting therefrom 27,000l., part of the annual sum of 36,000l.)	122,212	15	0
Ditto of the duties of excise on paper, granted from 5th April 1794	159,961	0	0
Ditto of the custom duties on ditto	7,699	10	11
	167,660	10	11
Deduct			
The annual directed by an act 34 Geo. III. cap. 20. to be set apart out of these duties, and carried to the consolidated fund	75,000	0	0
	92,660	10	11
The produce of the duties on sugar	274,877	16	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto of the stamp duties on certificates issued for killing game	17,438	1	3
Ditto of the duties on bills and receipts (after deducting 128,600l. per annum, carried to the consolidated fund)	44,971	7	8
Ditto of the 10l. per cent. on assessed taxes	50,378	12	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
	940,343	12	10 $\frac{3}{4}$

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By Virtue of an Act 35 Geo. III. the Sum of 18,000,000*l.* was borrowed for the Service of the Year 1795 ; the Contributors whereof were entitled, for every 100*l.* contributed and paid, to 100*l.* Stock in Annuities, at 3*l.* per Cent. to commence from the 5th of January 1795, and to be incorporated into, and made One Joint Stock with, the 3*l.* per Cent. Consolidated Annuities, which were granted by Acts 25, 28, 29, 32, and 33 Geo. II. and by several subsequent Acts ; and also to 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* in Annuities, at 4*l.* per Cent. to commence from the 10th of October 1794, and to be added to, and made One Joint Stock with, certain 4*l.* per Cent. Annuities, Established by Two Acts of Parliament of the 20th and 21st Years of his present Majesty's Reign, and several subsequent Acts ; and by the said Act also a farther Annuity of 8*s.* 6*d.* per Cent. per Annum, for a certain Term of $65\frac{1}{4}$ Years, to commence from the 10th of October 1794 ; and also, by one other Act of the same Session, to an additional Annuity of 1*s.* per Cent. per Annum from the same Time, and for the same Term, making together 9*s.* 6*d.* per Cent. per Annum, and to be together incorporated into, and made One Joint Stock with, certain Annuities, which were granted for 99 and 98 Years, from the 5th of January 1761 and the 5th of January 1762 (and then to cease) and were made One Joint Stock of Annuities, with certain other Annuities, by divers Acts of His Majesty's Reign : All which several Annuities, and the Charges attending the same, are charged upon, and made payable out of, the Consolidated Fund, viz.

The annual charge in respect of 18,000,000 <i>l.</i> at 3 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum, granted by the said act, commencing from the 5th January 1795, including 8,100 <i>l.</i> per annum for management, amounts to	£.	s.	d.
	548,100	0	0
The annual charge of the said 4 <i>l.</i> per cent. annuities of 33 <i>l.</i> 6 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> for each 100 <i>l.</i> contributed, making a capital of 6,000,000 <i>l.</i> , commencing from the 10th of October 1794, including 2,700 <i>l.</i> per annum for management, amounts to	242,700	0	0
The annual charge of 9 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> per cent. per annum on the said 18,000,000 <i>l.</i> commencing from the said 10th of October 1794, to continue $65\frac{1}{4}$ years, including 961 <i>l.</i> 17 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> for management, amounts to	86,461	17	6
The one-hundredth part of the said 18,000,000 <i>l.</i> to be set apart at the Exchequer, and issued to the Bank of England, to be by them carried to the account of the Commissioners for reducing the National Debt, pursuant to the act 32 Geo. III. will amount to the annual sum of	180,000	0	0

The one-hundredth part of the said 6,000,000*l.* in 4*l.* per cent. annuities, to be set apart at the Exchequer, and issued to the Bank, to be carried to the account of the said Commissioners, will amount to the annual sum of — — — — — *£.* *s.* *d.*
60,000 0 0

The annual sum to be set apart at the Exchequer, to be issued to the Bank, and to be carried to the account of the said Commissioners, in respect of the value of the annuities granted for 65 $\frac{1}{4}$ years, at the end of 45 years, amounts to — — — — — 12,835 0 0

1,130,096 17 6

By an act 35 Geo. III. for granting annuities to satisfy Navy and Victualling Bills, to such proprietors of Navy and Victualling Bills as were made out on or before the 30th of September 1793, who should deliver up their bills to be cancelled, were entitled, for every 100*l.* contained in such bills, to a capital of 108*l.* in annuities, after the rate of 5*l.* per cent. per annum, to commence from the 5th January 1795; and to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain annuities, established by the acts 24, 25, and 34 years of His Majesty's reign, whereby an addition was made to the capital of 5*l.* per cent. annuities, granted by the said acts, of 1,609,897*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.*: the annual sum payable in respect of the same amounts to — — — — — *£.* *s.* *d.*
80,494 17 10

And for management of the same, the annual sum of — — — — — 724 9 1
81,219 6 11

The annual sum to be set apart at the Exchequer, in respect of the one-hundredth part of the said capital of 1,609,897*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.* pursuant to the above-mentioned act of the 32 Geo. III. will amount to — — — — — 16,098 19 6
97,318 6 5
1,227,415 3 11

Surplus of this fund in the year ended the 10th of October 1798 — — — — — 82,082 1 10 $\frac{1}{2}$
1,309,497 5 9 $\frac{1}{2}$

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The Produce of the following DUTIES granted by sundry Acts of Parliament of the 35th Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for defraying the increased Charge on the Consolidated Fund, in respect of the Annuities, &c. established by the Acts 35 Geo. III. from the 5th day of July 1795, for One Year, ended the 10th of October 1798.

	£.	s.	d.
The produce of the additional duties on wines, from the 23d February 1795 — — —	389,958	0	0
Ditto of the additional duty on sweets, from ditto — — —	5,883	0	0
Ditto of the additional duties on British spirits, from ditto — — —	86,214	0	0
Ditto of the additional duties on foreign spirits, from ditto — — —	127,007	0	0
Ditto of the additional duties on tea, from 16th March 1795 — — —	194,132	5	2
Ditto of the additional duties on coffee and cocoa nuts, from ditto — — —	23,777	0	0
Ditto of the duties on fruit, fallad oil, waste silk, &c. from 5th April 1795 — — —	106,876	13	11½
Ditto of the additional duty on the exportation of rock salt and coals, from ditto — — —	18,254	0	0
Ditto of the duties on certificates issued for using hair-powder, from 5th May 1795 — — —	157,678	6	3
Ditto of the additional stamp duties on writs, agreements, indentures, &c. from 5th July 1795 — — —	31,777	18	3
Ditto of the additional stamp duties on receipts, &c. from ditto — — —	7,278	3	5
Ditto of the stamp duty on sea insurances, from ditto — — —	96,059	8	9
Cash brought to this accompt from the revenue of the Post-office, on 40,000l. per annum, pursuant to an act 37 Geo. III. cap. 18. for one year, ended the 10th October 1798 — — —	40,000	0	0
The produce of the duties on spirit licences — — —	24,601	10	0
	<u>1,309,497</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9½</u>

By Virtue of an Act 36 Geo. III. the Sum of 18,000,000*l.* was borrowed for the Service of the Year 1796, the Contributors whereof were entitled, for every 100*l.* contributed and paid, to 100*l.* Stock, in 3*l.* per Cent. Consolidated Annuities, and to an additional Stock of 20*l.* in like 3*l.* per Cent. Consolidated Annuities; the Whole to commence from the 5th of July 1795, and to be consolidated and made One Joint Stock with certain Annuities consolidated by the Acts 25, 28, 29, 32, and 33 Geo. II. and several subsequent Acts of Parliament; and also to a farther additional Stock of 25*l.* for each 100*l.* so paid, in Reduced Annuities, at 3*l.* per Cent. to be added to, and made One Joint Stock with, the 3*l.* per Cent. Annuities, which were reduced from 4*l.* per Cent. per Annum to 3*l.* per Cent. per Annum by an Act 23 Geo. II. and consolidated and made One Joint Stock with other Annuities by sundry subsequent Acts, and to commence from the 10th of October 1795; and also to a farther Annuity of 6*s.* 6*d.* per Cent. to continue for a certain Term of $64\frac{1}{4}$ Years, from the said 10th of October 1795, and then to cease; and to be added to, and made One Joint Stock with, certain Annuities granted for 99 and 98 Years, and by sundry Acts of Parliament with other Annuities consolidated and made One Joint Stock, and charged upon the Consolidated Fund: And by one other Act 36 Geo. III. the Sum of 7,500,000*l.* was also borrowed for the Service of the said Year 1796, the Contributors whereof were entitled, for every 100*l.* contributed and paid, to 100*l.* Stock in the said 3*l.* per Centum Consolidated Annuities, and to an additional Stock of 20*l.* in the said 3*l.* per Cent. Consolidated Annuities, to commence from the 5th of January 1796, and to be consolidated and made One Joint Stock with certain Annuities consolidated by the said Acts 25, 28, 29, 32, and 33 Geo. II. and several subsequent Acts; and also to a farther additional Capital of 25*l.* per Cent. for each 100*l.* so paid, in Reduced Annuities, at 3*l.* per Cent. to be added to, and made One Joint Stock with, the said 3*l.* per Cent. Annuities, which were reduced from 4*l.* to 3*l.* per Cent. by an Act 33 Geo. II. and consolidated and made One Joint Stock with other Annuities by sundry subsequent Acts, and to commence from the 5th of April 1796; and also to a farther additional Annuity of 5*s.* 6*d.* per Cent. to continue for a certain term of $63\frac{3}{4}$ Years, to commence from the said 5th of April 1796, and then to cease.

The annual charge in respect of 18,000,000*l.*, together with the additional capital of 20*l.* per cent. making together 21,000,000*l.* (but reduced by certain persons

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neglecting to complete their whole payments for 4,200l. to the sum of 21,595,800l.) in consolidated 3l. per cent. annuities, from the 5th July 1795, together with 9,718l. 2s. 2d. for management	£.	s.	d.
	657,592	2	2
The annual charge of the additional 25l. per cent. in 3l. per cent. reduced annuities, amounting to 4,500,000l., from the 10th October 1795, with 2,025l. for charge of management	137,025	0	0
The annual charge of the additional 6s. 6d. per cent. on 18,000,000l. for $64\frac{1}{4}$ years, from the said 10th of October 1795, together with 655l. 2s. 6d. for management	59,158	2	6
The one hundredth part of 21,595,800l. in consolidated 3l. per cent. annuities, to be set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to the said act 32 Geo. III. for one year	215,958	0	0
The one hundredth part of 4,500,000l. in reduced 3l. per cent. annuities, to be set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to the said act 32 Geo. III. for the same time	45,000	0	0
The annual sum to be set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to the said act 32 Geo. III, in respect of the value of the annuities granted for $64\frac{1}{4}$ years, at the end of 45 years	8,460	0	0
	1,123,193	4	8

The annual charge in respect of 7,500,000l., together with the additional capital of 20l. per cent., making together 9,000,000l. (but reduced, by certain persons neglecting to complete their whole payments for 65,800l. to the sum of 8,934,200l.) in consolidated 3l. per cent. annuities, from the 5th January 1796, together with 4,020l.

7s. 9½d. for management	£.	s.	d.
	272,046	7	9½
The annual charge of the additional 25l. per cent. in 3l. per cent. reduced annuities, amounting to 1,875,000l. (but reduced, by certain persons neglecting to complete their whole payments for 15,375l. to the sum of 1,859,625l.) from the 5th of April 1796, with 836l. 16s. 7½d. for management	56,625	11	7½
The annual charge of the additional 5s. 6d. per cent. on 7,500,000l. for $63\frac{3}{4}$ years, from the said 5th of April 1796, (after deducting the annuity of 42l. 12s. 6d. forfeited by certain persons not completing their whole payments) with 231l. 11s. for management	20,813	18	6

The one hundredth part of 8,934,200l. in consolidated 3l. per cent. annuities

ties, to be set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to the act 32 Geo. III. for one year — —	£.	s.	d.
	89,342	0	0
The one hundredth part of 1,859,625l. in reduced 3l. per cent. annuities, to be set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to the said act 32 Geo. III. for the same time — —	18,596	5	0
The annual sum to be set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to the act 32 Geo. III. in respect of the value of the annuities granted for $63\frac{3}{4}$ years, from the 5th of April 1796. at the end of 45 years — —	2,925	0	0
By an act 30 Geo. III. cap. 122. for granting annuities to satisfy certain Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, such proprietors of the said bills as were made out on or before the 31st of May 1795, who should deliver up their bills to be cancelled on or before the 1st of July 1766, were entitled, for every 100l. contained in the said bills, to the sum of 105l. capital stock, attended with annuities, after the rate of 5l. per centum per annum, to commence from the 5th of January 1796; and such proprietors of bills made out after the 31st of May 1795, and on or before the 30th of September 1795, who should deliver up their said bills to be cancelled before the said 1st of July 1796, should be entitled, for every 100l. contained in the said bills, to 104l. capital stock, attended with the like annuities, after the rate of 5l. per cent. per annum, to commence from the said 5th of January 1796, and to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain annuities, at 5l. per cent. per annum, established by the acts 23, 24, 34, and 35 Geo. III., and charged upon the consolidated fund; in consequence of which act there has been delivered up, in Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, for which annuities, to the amount of 4,474,074l. 4s. 6d. have been established, and become payable at the Bank of England: which annuities, with			

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amount, per annum, to —	222,690	0	10½
The one-hundredth part of 4,414,074l.			
4s. 6d. in annuities at 5l. per cent.			
to be set apart at the Exchequer			
quarterly, pursuant to the act 32			
Geo. III. to be paid to the Bank of			
England, to be by them carried to			
the account of the Commissioners			
for reducing the National Debt, is,			
per annum — — —	44,140	14	10
	727,179	18	7½
	1,850,373	3	3½

The Produce of the following DUTIES granted by fundry Acts of Parliament of the 36th Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for defraying the increased Charge on the Consolidated Fund, in respect to the Annuities, &c. established by the Acts 36 Geo. III. from the 10th of October 1797, to the 10th of October 1798.

	£.	s.	d.
The produce of the duties on spirit licences —	89,906	0	0
The produce of the additional duties on tobacco and snuff, granted from 7th December 1795 —	183,265	0	0
The arrears of the additional 10l. per cent. on assessed taxes, from the 10th of October 1795 —	50,735	2	9¾
Ditto of the 2s. duty on horses, from the 5th of April 1796 — — — — —	94,029	9	3½
Ditto of the additional tax on horses, from ditto —	115,757	17	1¾
The produce of the tax on horse-dealers, from the 24th of December 1795 — — — — —	1,217	3	8
Ditto of the tax on legacies, from the 26th of April 1796 —	19,118	7	3
Ditto of the duties of customs on wines —	471,551	11	7
Ditto of the duties of excise on ditto, from the 17th of April 1796 — — — — —	193,365	0	0
Ditto of the additional duties on sweets, from ditto —	6,085	0	0
Ditto of the tax on hats, from the 5th of August 1796, (after reserving 9,479l. 11s. for the consolidated fund) — — — — —	41,416	3	9
The arrears of the tax on dogs, from the 5th of July 1796 — — — — —	76,952	10	7½
The reduction of the drawbacks on sugar —	116,676	5	8
The allowance for waste on salt, from the 5th of January 1796 — — — — —	32,000	0	0
Deficiency of this fund to answer the charge —	358,297	11	6
	1,850,373	3	3½

In pursuance of an Act 37 Geo. III. Cap. 10, 18,000,000l. were subscribed for the Service of the Year 1797; the Contributors whereof were entitled, for every 100l. contributed and paid, to the Principal Sum of 112l. 10s. in a Capital Stock of Annuities, carrying 5l. per Cent. per Annum, to commence from the 10th of October 1796: And by one other Act 37 Geo. III. the Sum of 14,500,000l. was directed to be raised by Way of Annuities for the Service of the Year 1797; the Contributors whereof to be entitled, for every 100l. contributed and paid, to 100l., with an additional Capital of 25l. in the 3l. per Cent. Consolidated Annuities, and to commence from the 5th of January 1797; to an additional Capital of 50l. in the 3l. per Cent. Reduced Annuities, and to commence from the 5th of April 1797; also to an additional Capital of 20l. per Cent. in the Capital Stock of 4l. per Cent. Annuities, to commence from the 5th of April 1797; and to a farther Annuity of 6s. 6d. (subject to such Deduction as is mentioned in the said Act) to continue for a certain Term of 62 Years and 9 Months, from the 5th of April 1797, and then to cease: The said several Annuities to be payable at the Bank of England, and charged on the Consolidated Fund.

By one other Act of the same Session of Parliament, for guaranteeing the Payment of the Dividends on a Loan of 1,620,000l. to the Emperor of Germany, and the regular Redemption of the Capital to be created thereby, the Contributors for raising the same were entitled to an Annuity at 3l. per Cent. after the Rate of 226l. 10s. Capital Stock for every 100l. contributed and paid; which Annuity, upon the Failure of depositing in the Hands of the Bank of England sufficient Monies to pay the said Annuities, and of a Sum Equal to 1l. per Cent. per Annum on the Capital of the said Loan, is charged upon, and made payable out of, the Consolidated Fund.

N. B. The whole Sum of 3,500,000l., in Addition to 14,500,000l., not having been raised, a Deduction was therefore made on the Annuity of 62 Years and 9 Months of 6s. per Cent.

The annual charge on 20,124,843l. 15s. the amount of 112l. 10s. at 5l. per cent. on 17,888,750l., the subscriptions paid in full on the first above-mentioned act, with 9,056l. 3s. 7d. for management	£.	s.	d.
The annual charge at 3l. per cent. on 18,125,000l., the amount of 14,500,000l. at 125l. per cent. with 8,156l. 5s. for management	1,015,298	7	4
	551,906	5	0

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The annual charge at 3l. per cent. on 7,250,000l., the amount of 14,500,000l. at 50l. per cent. with 3,262l. 10s. for management — — —	220,762	10	0
The annual charge of 4l. per cent. on 2,900,000l., the amount of ditto, at 20l. per cent. with 1,305l. for ditto — — —	117,305	0	0
The annual charge of 6s. per cent. for 62 years and 9 months on 14,500,000l., with 489l. 7s. 6d. for ditto — — —	43,989	7	6
The one-hundredth part of 20,124,843l. 15s. in 5l. per cent. annuities, to be quarterly set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to an act 32 Geo. III. to be paid to the Bank, to be by them carried to the ac- count of the Commissioners for reducing the Na- tional Debt — — —	201,248	8	9
The one-hundredth part of 18,125,000l. in consoli- dated 3l. per cent. annuities; ditto — — —	181,250	0	0
The one-hundredth part of 7,250,000l. in reduced 3l. per cent. annuities; ditto — — —	72,500	0	0
The one-hundredth part of 2,900,000l. in 4l. per cent. annuities; ditto — — —	29,000	0	0
The annual sum to be set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to the said act 32 Geo. III. in respect of the annuities granted for 62½ years, from the 5th of April 1797, at the end of 45 years, to be paid to the Bank, and to be by them carried to the ac- count of the said Commissioners for reducing the National Debt — — —	5,920	0	0
	2,439,179	18	7

By an act 37 Geo. III. cap. 9. for granting annuities to satisfy certain Navy, Victualling, Transport, and Exchequer Bills, such proprietors of the said Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, as were made out on or before the 31st of December 1795, who should, on or before the 11th of November 1796, deliver up their bills to be cancelled, were entitled for every 100l. contained in the certificates to be made out for the amount of the principal and interest of the said bills (and so in proportion for a greater or less sum) to 178l. 11s. 5d. in the 3l. per cent. consolidated annuities, to commence from the 5th of July 1796; or to 138l. 17s. 9¼d. in the 4l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 10th of October 1796; or to 119l. 0s. 11¼d. in the 5l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 5th July 1796, at the option of such proprietor: and the proprietors of such bills as were dated after the 31st of December 1795, and on or before the 30th of April 1796, who should deliver up their bills to be cancelled on or before the said 11th of November 1796, should be entitled for every 100l. to 176l. 19s. 9¼d. in the said 3l. per cent annuities, to commence from the said 5th of July 1796; or to

137l. 18s. 7½d. in the said 4l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 10th of October 1796; or to 118l. 6s. 10¼d. in the said 5l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 5th of July 1796, at the option of the said proprietor: and the proprietors of the like bills, made out after the 30th of April 1796, and on or before the 31st of July 1796, who should deliver up their bills to be cancelled on or before the said 11th of November 1796, should be entitled to 175l. 8s. 9d. in the said 3l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 5th July 1796; or to 136l. 9s. 8½d. in the said 4l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 10th of October 1796; or to 117l. 12s. 11¼d. in the said 5l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the said 5th of July 1796; and the proprietors of such bills as were made out after the 31st of July 1796, and on or before the 27th October 1796, who should carry their bills to be cancelled on or before the said 11th of November 1796, should be entitled to 173l. 18s. 3d. in the said 3l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 5th July 1796; or to 136l. 1s. 1d. in the 4l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 10th October 1796; or to 116l. 19s. 2d. in the said 5l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the said 5th of July 1796.

And by the said act, the proprietors of any Exchequer bills made out by virtue of an act 36 Geo. III. cap. 31. who should on or before the said 11th of November 1796, carry such Exchequer bills to the paymaster of Exchequer bills to be cancelled, should be entitled, for every 100l. (and so in proportion for any greater or less sum contained in the certificates to be made out for the same) to 176l. 19s. 9¾d. in the said 3l. per centum annuities, to commence from the 5th of July 1796; or to 137l. 18s. 7½d. in the said 4l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the 10th of October 1796; or to 118l. 6s. 10¼d. in the said 5l. per cent. annuities, to commence from the said 5th of July 1796, at the option of the said proprietors. The said several annuities to be paid and payable out of the consolidated fund.

N. B. By a subsequent act, a farther time was allowed the proprietors of the said bills to deliver them up.

The annual charge at 3l. per cent. on 16,438,175l. 5s. (to which the sum of 16,441,175l. 4s. 9d. granted in lieu of Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, is reduced in that stock at the Bank, by the Navy-office having withdrawn cheques to the amount of 3,643l. 18s. 9d., and several alterations and additions made by the Bank) with 7,397l. 3s. 6½d. for charges of management

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The annual charge at 4l. per cent. on 764,861l. 5s. 10d. granted in lieu of Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, with 344l. 3s. 7d. for charges of management	30,938	12	7
The annual charge at 5l. per cent. on 2,030,590l. 7s. 2d. granted in lieu of ditto, with 913l. 15s. 4d. for ditto	102,443	11	8
The annual charge at 3l. per cent. on 1,999,699l. 4s. 4d. granted in lieu of Exchequer bills delivered up to be cancelled, pursuant to the said acts, with 899l. 17s. 3½d. for management	60,890	16	9½
The annual charge at 4l. per cent. on 104,432l. 5s. 8d. granted in lieu of ditto, with 46l. 19s. 10½d. for management	4,224	5	8½
The annual charge at 5l. per cent. on 270,202l. 4s. 8d. granted in lieu of ditto, with 121l. 11s. 9¾d. for management	13,631	12	0½
The one-hundredth part of the capital of 3l. per cent. consolidated annuities, granted in lieu of Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, delivered up to be cancelled pursuant to the acts 37 Geo. III. to be set apart at the Exchequer, pursuant to an act 32 Geo. III.	164,408	19	4½
Ditto of 764,861l. 5s. 10d. in 4l. per cent. annuities, granted in lieu of the said bills pursuant to the said acts, 37 Geo. III. ditto	7,648	12	3
Ditto of 2,030,596l. 7s. 2d. in 5l. per cent. annuities, granted in lieu of the said bills pursuant to the said acts 37 Geo. III. ditto	20,305	19	3
Ditto of 1,999,699l. 4s. 4d. in 3l. per cent. consolidated annuities, granted in lieu of Exchequer bills delivered up to be cancelled, pursuant to the said acts 37 Geo. III. to be set apart at the Exchequer in pursuance of the act 32 Geo. III.	19,996	19	10
Ditto of 104,432l. 5s. 8d. in 4l. per cent. annuities, granted in lieu of ditto, ditto	1,044	6	5
Ditto of 270,202l. 4s. 8d. in 5l. per cent. annuities, granted in lieu of ditto, ditto	2,702	0	5
	928,778	5	0
	3,367,958	3	7

By an act 37 Geo. III. cap. 144. 1,500,000*l.* was granted for the service of Ireland, the interest and charges to be provided for in such manner as the Parliament of that kingdom should approve; therefore the expences incurred on that account, which are paid by quarterly payments at the Exchequer, must be deducted from the charge of the above-mentioned loan, and amounts per annum to

£.	s.	d.
126,871	1	10½

Which will reduce the above charge to

£.	s.	d.
3,241,087	1	8½

The Produce of the following DUTIES granted by sundry Acts of Parliament of the 37th Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for defraying the increased Charge on the Consolidated Fund, in respect of the Annuities, &c. established by the Acts 37 Geo. III. from the Commencement of the said Duties, to the 10th of October 1798, viz.

	£.	s.	d.
The produce of the duties of customs on sugar and bricks, with the 5 <i>l.</i> and 10 <i>l.</i> per cent. granted from the 28th December 1796	399,261	13	7
Ditto of the duty of excise on bricks made in Great Britain, from ditto	25,755	0	0
Ditto of the duty on cocoa nuts, from ditto	5,604	0	0
Ditto of the additional duty on tea, from the 8th December 1796	252,442	9	8
Ditto of the additional duty on British spirits, from the 10th December 1796	87,623	0	0
Ditto of the additional duty on foreign spirits	126,215	0	0
Ditto of the additional tax on stage coaches, granted from the 5th January 1797	53,110	8	10
Ditto of the additional tax on auctions, granted from the 28th December 1796	45,415	0	0
Ditto of the additional tax of 3 <i>d.</i> per pound on pepper, &c. granted from 18th July 1797	126,176	9	1
Ditto of the additional tax of 20 <i>l.</i> per cent. from 5th April 1797	244,835	0	0
Ditto of the additional tax on inhabited houses, from 5th July 1797	43,910	0	0
Ditto of the additional tax on male servants, ditto	6,960	0	0
Ditto of the additional tax of 3 <i>s.</i> on horses, charged by the act 37 Geo. III. granted from the 5th July 1797	66,420	0	0
Ditto of the farther additional tax on horses and mules, granted from said 5th July 1797	4,285	0	0
Ditto of the tax on clocks and watches, granted from ditto	48,820	0	0
Ditto of the produce of the duties on wrought plate	3	3	4½
Ditto of the produce of the duties on spirit licences	12,250	0	0
Surplus income of the Post-office, after reserving the sum of 410,556 <i>l.</i> and of 40,000 <i>l.</i> for one year, to 10th October 1798	207,444	0	0

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The produce of the additional stamp duties, granted from the 5th July 1797, after deducting 156,605l. per annum	547,959	15	0
Deficiency of this fund to answer the charge	936,597	2	2
	<u>3,241,087</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>8½</u>

In pursuance of an Act 38 Geo. III. Cap. 37. 17,000,000l. were borrowed for the Service of the Year 1798, the Contributors whereof were entitled for every 100l. contributed and paid to the Capital Stock of 150l. in Annuities, at 3l. per cent. to commence from the 5th of January 1798, and to be added to, and made One Joint Stock of Annuities with, the 3l. per Cent. Consolidated Annuities, payable at the Bank of England; to an additional Capital of 50l. per Cent. to commence from the 5th of April 1798, to be added to, and made One Joint Stock with, the Reduced Annuities, payable at the said Bank; and also to an Annuity at the Rate of 4s. 11d. per Cent. to continue for a certain Term of 61 Years and 9 Months, from the said 5th of April 1798, and then to cease; to be added to, and made One Joint Stock with, certain Annuities payable there, consolidated by fundry Acts of Parliament, and called Long Annuities: Which several Annuities are by the said Act charged upon the Consolidated Fund, and directed to be payable and paid at the same Time, and in the same Manner, as the Annuities charged upon that Fund are payable and paid.

By the Act 38 Geo. III. Cap. 16. for granting an Aid and Contribution to His Majesty for the Prosecution of the War, it is directed that the Produce, to the Amount of 7,000,000l. shall be applied towards the Supply of the Year 1798: The Surplus to be applied, in the first Place, to pay Annuities in respect of any Sum borrowed, not exceeding 8,000,000l. and carried to the Consolidated Fund, and the Remainder to be paid to the Bank, and by them to be placed to the Account of the Commissioners for reducing the National Debt: And by one other Act 38 Geo. III. Cap. 76. the Monies arising thereby, together with any other Rates and Duties granted in that Session of Parliament, were applicable to such Services as should be voted, not exceeding 7,000,000l.: Therefore the Duties on the other Side are here made chargeable only with the Annuities and Expences in respect of 9,000,000l.:

The annual charge of 9,000,000l. with the addition of 50l. per cent. making 13,500,000l. at 3l. per cent. per annum	£.	s.	d.
	405,000	0	0
The charge of management on ditto	6,075	0	0
The annual charge of the farther additional capital of 50l. per cent. on 9,000,000l. being 4,500,000l.	135,000	0	0
The charge of management on ditto	2,025	0	0
The farther additional capital of 4s. 11d. per cent. to continue for $61\frac{3}{4}$ years, is, per annum	22,125	0	0
The charge for management on ditto	248	18	$1\frac{1}{2}$
The one-hundredth part of 13,500,000l. in consolidated 3l. per cent. annuities, to be set apart at the Exchequer quarterly, and paid to the Bank of England, and to be by them placed to the account of the Commissioners for reducing the National Debt, pursuant to an act 32 Geo. III.	135,000	0	0
The one-hundredth part of 4,500,000l. in 3l. per cent. reduced annuities, to be set apart at the Exchequer quarterly, and paid to the Bank, to be by them placed to the account of the Commissioners for reducing the National Debt, pursuant to the act 32 Geo. III.	45,000	0	0
The actual value of 4s. 11d. per cent. on 9,000,000l. for $61\frac{3}{4}$ years, at the End of 45 years	2,880	0	0
	753,853	18	$1\frac{1}{2}$
By an act 38 Geo. III. Cap. 90. 2,000,000l. were granted for the service of Ireland, the interest and charges to be provided for in such manner as the Parliament of that kingdom should approve; therefore the expences incurred on that account, which are paid by quarterly payments at the Exchequer, must be deducted from the charge of the above-mentioned loan, and amounts per annum to	167,411	19	7
Which will reduce the above charge to	585,941	18	$6\frac{1}{2}$

The DUTIES granted for Payment of the Charges and Expences in respect of 9,000,000l. Part of 17,000,000l. granted by an Act 38 Geo. III. for the Service of the Year 1798, &c.

The produce of the duties on houses inhabited, according to the number of windows therein, granted by an act 38 Geo. III. from the 5th of April 1798 in England, and Whitsunday 1798 in Scotland	£.	s.	d.
	Nil.		
The produce of the duties upon male servants, granted by an act 38 Geo. III. from the 5th April 1798	Nil.		
The produce of the duties on carriages, ditto	Nil.		
The produce of the duties on horses, mares, and geldings, kept or used for riding or drawing carriages, ditto	2,500	0	0

DEBATES.

381

£. s. d.

The produce of the duties on horses, mares, and geldings, not charged as above, and upon mules, ditto	Nil.
The produce of the duties on dogs, ditto — —	Nil.
The produce of the duty of excise on tea, granted by an act 38 Geo. III. from the 10th of May 1798	34,957 0 0
The produce of the additional duties on salt, granted by an act 38 Geo. III. from the 5th April 1798	100,429 12 8
The produce of the duty on certificates issued with respect to armorial bearings, granted by an act 38 Geo. III. from the 24th of June 1798 — —	7,373 0 0
	145,259 12 8
Deficiency of this fund to answer the charge	440,682 5 10 $\frac{1}{2}$
	585,941 18 6 $\frac{1}{2}$

The produce of the taxes in the several years, is taken from the account of the receipt of the same in the Exchequer; the difference between which and the accounts of the several offices of customs, excise, &c. arises from the former being made up to a different day from the latter.

Presented pursuant to an act of the 27th year of his present Majesty's reign, the 31st day of December 1798, by

GEORGE ROSE.

AMOUNT of the Annual Charge of the PUBLIC DEBT created in the Years under-mentioned; and the Produce of the several Duties granted for defraying the same, in the Year ended the 1^{oth} Day of October 1798.

YEARS.	CHARGE.		PRODUCE.		SURPLUS.		DEFICIENCY.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
1789 —	59,259	15 7½	116,981	9 0½	57,721	13 5		
1793 —	252,812	10 0	217,463	0 0	—	—	35,349	10 0
1794 —	773,324	0 9	940,343	12 10¼	167,019	12 1¼		
1795 —	1,227,415	3 11	1,309,497	5 9½	82,082	1 10½		
1796 —	1,850,373	3 3½	1,492,075	11 9½	—	—	358,297	11 6
1797 —	3,241,087	1 8½	2,304,489	19 6½	—	—	936,597	2 2
1798 —	585,941	18 6½	145,259	12 8	—	—	440,682	5 10½

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An ACCOMPT of the Total Produce of the DUTIES of CUSTOMS, EXCISE, STAMPS, and INCIDENTS, respectively, for One Year, ended the 10th Day of October 1798; distinguishing, as far as possible, in each Branch, the Produce on every separate Article, the Duties on which have amounted to One Thousand Pounds, or more, in the Four Quarters of the said Year, viz.

	£.	s.	d.
The total produce of the duties of customs, for one year, ended the 10th day of October 1798, as per accompt (A.)	5,745,447	0	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ditto of the excise, for one year, ended ditto, (exclusive of 682,113l. the produce of the annual malt duties) as per accompt (B.)	9,099,641	15	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ditto of the stamp duties, for one year, ended ditto, as per accompt (C.)	2,262,160	12	0
Ditto of incidents at the receipt of the Exchequer, for one year, ended ditto, as per accompt (D.)	2,838,210	0	9 $\frac{1}{4}$
	<u>19,945,459</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8$\frac{1}{4}$</u>

Memorandum :

In the sum of 2,838,210l. os. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. stated in the accompt of incidents at the Exchequer, is included 533,854l. 12s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. being the amount of imprests, and other monies paid within the above period.

Presented pursuant to an act of the 27th year of his present Majesty's reign, the 31st day of December 1798, by

GEORGE ROSE.

An ACCOUNT of the Total Net Produce, paid into the Exchequer, of the Duties of CUSTOMS, in England and Scotland; distinguishing, as far as possible, the Produce on every separate Article, the Duties on which shall have amounted to 1,000l. or more, in the Four Quarters ending the 10th October 1798.

SPECIES of GOODS,

Net Produce, subject to the Payment of Bounties, Charges of Management, &c.

	£.	s.	d.
Ashes, Pearl and Pot	3,489	18	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Barilla	29,850	8	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Books, bound and unbound	1,200	9	8
Bottles, Glafs	1,148	9	9 $\frac{3}{4}$
Brimstone	15,646	11	9 $\frac{3}{4}$
Bristles, undrest	6,006	15	1 $\frac{3}{4}$
Bugle, Great	450	6	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
China Ware	2,438	16	9
Copper, unwrought	973	2	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cordage	1,409	11	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cork	6,077	12	11
Corn, Oats	13,137	17	8
— Wheat	38,016	16	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
DRUGS.			
Almonds, Bitter	1,009	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Benjamin	406	3	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Borax, refined	210	6	7
Buds of Cassia	336	15	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Camphire, unrefined	526	0	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cassia Fistula	949	19	2
— Lignea	505	9	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cortex Peru	3,179	18	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Cream of Tartar	774	16	7
Gum Senegal	1,428	18	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Julap	1,302	4	1
Juniper Berries	2,733	8	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Manna	813	5	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
Oil, Palm	1,238	9	11
— Perfumed	1,255	10	2
— Turpentine	1,831	7	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
Opium	1,014	11	2
Quicksilver	6,241	1	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Rhubarb	3,870	10	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Saccharum Saturni	2,176	8	11
Sarsaparilla	218	15	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
Senna	1,979	0	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Succus Liquoritiæ	9,220	12	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
Verdigrease	868	11	4

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Iron, Ba
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Kelp

LINEN.

Vor

DEBATES.

385

	£.	s.	d.
Dye Stuffs, &c. Smalts	11,982	7	8
Elephants, Teeth	1,587	6	4½
Feathers for Beds	7,660	0	10
Fish, Anchovies	628	11	5¼
Fruit, Lemons and Oranges	17,200	19	1¼
— Nuts, small	1,918	1	10
Glass Plates	4,320	8	10

GROCERY.—Almonds, Jordan	1,768	7	10¾
— not Jordan	1,669	19	0¼
Anniseed	254	15	7
Cloves	3,908	13	10½
Cocoa	2,942	5	11
Coffee	45,380	6	9
Currants	68,401	6	10½
Figs	5,609	6	9¼
Ginger	2,933	9	0¼
Mace	2,196	16	1
Nutmegs	3,098	18	10½
Pepper	22,137	15	5
Pimento	4,858	1	4¼
Prunes	2,620	8	2
Raisins—Denia	28,570	4	6¼
— Faro	820	16	0¼
— Lexia	10,498	7	2½
— Lipari	6,562	11	7½
— Smyrna	6,259	8	11¼
— Solis	18,891	18	0¾
Succads	1,174	1	2
Sugar, Brown	1,782,666	5	6¼
Tamarinds	784	3	6½
Tea	132,208	2	11½
Turmeric	1,435	6	5

Hair, Horse	523	1	5
— Human	462	6	6
Hats, Chip	1,209	17	10½
— Straw	592	0	3½
Hemp, rough	138,195	19	0
Hides, Horse	1,726	9	10
— Indian	2,107	14	3¼
— Losh	8,845	6	5
— Ox or Cow	2,826	7	4
Incle, wrought	1,208	12	11
Iron, Bar	152,587	3	10¾
— Cast	329	15	6¾
Kelp	1,468	5	11

LINEN.—Cambricks	470	16	1½
— Canvas, Heffins	10,662	17	5½
— Spruce	4,685	5	6½
— Damask Tabling, Silesia	1,123	16	2
— Diaper Napkeuing, Silesia	258	16	1½

			£.	s.	d.
LINEN.—Drilling			5,067	15	4 ³ / ₄
Germany, narrow, not above 31 and half			35,871	7	0 ¹ / ₄
Russia, broad, above 22 and half			37,730	9	1 ¹ / ₄
above 31 and half			2,396	8	7 ¹ / ₄
above 36			12,069	12	5 ¹ / ₄
narrow			9,911	0	2
Towelling and Napkening			2,213	5	2 ¹ / ₄
Manufactured and unmanufactured Articles of India			5,396	13	1
Mats, Russia			1,291	15	7 ¹ / ₄
Molasses			499	15	7 ³ / ₄
Oil, ordinary			6,702	15	3
Sallad			1,656	10	2
Train			5,349	8	5
Paper			2,296	0	8 ¹ / ₄
Pictures			520	15	11 ¹ / ₄
Piece Goods of India, Muslins			47,443	2	9
Nankeens			4,877	12	8
prohibited			8,642	8	2
Pitch			412	11	7
Salt Petre			462	14	2 ¹ / ₄
Seeds, Clover			5,206	16	0 ¹ / ₄
Shells, Mother of Pearl			3,624	17	2 ¹ / ₄
SILK.—Bengal, Raw			12,513	8	11
China, Raw			11,552	0	10
Italian, Raw			30,569	1	11 ¹ / ₄
Thrown			156,717	12	11
Waste			1,871	18	8
SKINS.—Bear, Black			4,625	4	2
Beaver			683	18	1
Calf, Raw			5,085	15	8
Tanned			11,570	0	11 ¹ / ₄
Deer in Hair			3,624	2	1 ¹ / ₄
Fox, ordinary			660	18	1 ¹ / ₄
Kid, dressed			1,420	15	7
undressed			3,471	16	5 ¹ / ₄
Martin			1,700	8	0 ¹ / ₄
Mink			131	14	4
Musquash			548	2	4
Otter			401	8	9
Raccoon			368	7	10
Seal			2,134	7	3
Wolf			971	12	7
Snuff			414	13	7
Soap, Hard			1,092	15	11 ¹ / ₄
Spirits, Brandy			37,034	16	9
Geneva			23,706	18	7
Rum			75,377	11	11 ¹ / ₄
Tar			5,612	7	8
Thread, Sifters			725	15	0
Tobacco			273,105	5	0

Tow
Turpentin
Wax, Bee

WINE.—

WOOD.—

Subsidies

Carried

Coals and
King's sh

Received

DEBATES.

387

			£.	s.	d.
Tow	—	—	3,715	6	6
Turpentine	—	—	10,654	16	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Wax, Bees	—	—	6,379	8	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
WINE.—Canary	—	—	42	5	6
French	—	—	20,782	6	8 $\frac{3}{4}$
Madeira	—	—	17,763	9	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
Portugal	—	—	633,143	11	6
Rhenish	—	—	2,307	2	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Spanish	—	—	95,121	8	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
WOOD.—Balks	—	—	3,492	10	5 $\frac{3}{4}$
Battens	—	—	12,380	19	7
Boards, Paling	—	—	1,672	4	2
Scale	—	—	1,006	14	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
Deals	—	—	161,910	12	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Deal Ends	—	—	4,905	2	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Lathwood	—	—	2,731	16	5
Mahogany	—	—	5,819	1	0 $\frac{3}{4}$
Mafts	—	—	7,262	8	9
Plank, Oak	—	—	6,105	11	11
Staves	—	—	19,903	5	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Timber, Fir	—	—	65,878	17	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Oak	—	—	645	14	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ufers	—	—	1,157	18	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Wainfcot, Logs	—	—	2,650	14	2 $\frac{1}{4}$
Yarn, Cotton	—	—	80	5	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mohair	—	—	37	2	9
Subsidies collected on Goods exported.	{	Allum — —	1,366	17	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
		Coals — —	94,736	1	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
		Lead — —	21,728	2	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
		Tin — —	5,925	14	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
		Cochineal — —	62	10	0 $\frac{3}{4}$
		Indigo — —	10,159	16	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
		Skins, Beaver — —	506	14	11
		Salt, Rock — —	3,989	3	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
		Other Subsidy Articles	5,227	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Carried Coastwise.—Coals	—	—	584,988	12	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
Stones and Slates	—	—	15,059	5	8
Wine	—	—	1,871	7	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
Coals and Salt, 1795	—	—	20,081	11	9
King's share of condemned Tobacco	—	—	688	13	2
Received from the Inspector of Corn Returns	—	—	689	11	10
the Receiver General of Excise, for Wine sold	—	—	61	4	0 $\frac{3}{4}$
the Receiver of Fines and Forfeitures	—	—	5,421	14	4
the Earl of Liverpool, on account of corn	—	—	23,950	0	0
on Account of bonded Wine in Scotland	—	—	4,187	12	9 $\frac{3}{4}$

	£.	s.	d.
Remittances from the Plantations — — —	30,897	14	11½
Received from the Receiver General of the Counties, on account of Windows, by the 24th Geo. III.	189,022	7	3¼
Sundry small Articles, the Duties of which have not amounted to 1,000l. each — — —	73,205	2	10¼
Total	£. 5,745,447	0	10¼

GENERAL STATEMENT of the preceding ACCOUNT.

DISCHARGE.			£.	s.	d.
By bounties — — —			481,173	1	0½
By ditto for raising seamen — — —			2,058	15	3
Repayments on over entries and damaged goods			23,944	6	5
Paid towards the support of His Majesty's civil go- vernment in Scotland — — —			39,319	2	2¼
Charges of management — — —			431,385	14	11
Payment into the Exchequer :	£.	s.	d.		
On Consolidated Customs —	3,417,390	12	6		
— Sugar, 1791 — —	269,367	7	8½		
— Paper, 1794 — —	6,641	19	9¾		
— Bricks and tiles, 1794 — —	167	9	3½		
— Slates and stones, 1794 — —	13,539	19	10½		
— Fruit, silk, &c. 1795 — —	103,812	7	10¼		
— Coals and salt, 1795 — —	18,180	2	0		
— Wine, 1796 — — —	455,951	5	1½		
— Sugar, bricks, &c. including 5 and 10 per cent. 1796	369,871	18	0		
— Pepper, &c. 1797 — —	111,939	15	5		
— Plate, 1797 — — —	3	3	4½		
			4,766,866	1	0
Total	£. 5,745,447	0	10¼		

Inspector-General's Office,
Custom House, London,
December 3d, 1798.

THOMAS IRVING,
Inspector General of the Imports and
Exports of Great Britain, &c.

Note.—In the above account the duties imposed by the act of the last session of Parliament, chap. 76 (commonly called the Convoy Act) are not included, because some part of those duties were bonded, the merchants being unable to ascertain the true value of the goods at the time the entries were made.

The payments into the Exchequer, from the commencement of the said act (viz. the 5th July) to the 10th of October last, on account of these duties, amounted to 246,494l. 5s. 5d. but this sum conveys no adequate idea of the probable produce of the duty, because a great proportion of the sums collected at the out-ports within the quarter, had not reached the Exchequer on the 10th of October, as the duties are remitted from thence by bills payable 30 days after date.

EXCISE.—An ACCOUNT of the Total Net Produce of the DUTIES of EXCISE, for One Year, ended the 10th October 1798.

DEBATES.

389

ARTICLES.	ENGLAND.		SCOTLAND.	TOTAL.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	£.	s. d.
Auctions and auction licences	—	—	—	96,989	0 0
Beer	—	—	—	4,000	0 0
Bricks and tiles	—	—	—	2,284,577	0 0
Candles, and licences to manufacturers of ditto	—	—	—	21,000	0 0
Coaches, and coachmakers' licences	—	—	—	2,500	0 0
Cocoa nuts and coffee	—	—	—	83,901	0 0
Cyder, perry, and verjuice	—	—	—	214,309	0 0
Glaſs	—	—	—	2,151	0 0
Hides, skins, vellum, and parchment	—	—	—	28,780	0 0
Hops	—	—	—	10,086	0 0
Malt, perpetual	—	—	—	11,500	0 0
Methueſlin or mead, and vinegar	—	—	—	13,000	0 0
Printed goods	—	—	—	67,831	0 0
Sope	—	—	—	18,000	0 0
Spirits { British	—	—	—	739,877	0 0
Foreign	—	—	—	21,710	0 0
Starch	—	—	—	278,279	0 0
Sweets	—	—	—	383,938	0 0
Tea	—	—	—	15,500	0 0
Tobacco and ſnuff, and licences for ſelling and manufacturing ditto	—	—	—	28,500	0 0
	—	—	—	42,500	0 0
	—	—	—	1,500	0 0
	—	—	—	52,094	0 0
	—	—	—	9,532	0 0
	—	—	—	536,114	15 14
	—	—	—	315,910	0 0
	—	—	—	44,000	0 0

ARTICLES.	ENGLAND.		SCOTLAND.	TOTAL.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	£.	s. d.
Wine —	110,234	0 0	16,000	126,234	0 0
Wire —	3,447	0 0	—	3,447	0 0
Licences to Dealers in coffee, chocolate, or tea	14,474	0 0	2,000	16,474	0 0
Makers of, and dealers in, exciseable commodities	43,634	0 0	2,500	46,134	0 0
Retailers of spirituous liquors	150,591	0 0	14,000	164,591	0 0
Ditto, of wine	29,950	0 0	—	29,950	0 0
Sellers of gold and silver plate	8,523	0 0	500	9,023	0 0
Commenced { Spirits { British	69,323	0 0	—	69,323	0 0
6th Jan. 1791 { Foreign	122,278	0 0	10,000	132,278	0 0
22d Feb. 1794 { British	69,418	0 0	—	69,418	0 0
29th March 1794, bricks and tiles	121,992	0 0	12,000	133,992	0 0
6th April 1794, paper	49,890	0 0	1,000	50,890	0 0
18th April 1794, glafs	131,025	0 0	19,500	150,525	0 0
24th Feb. 1795 { Spirits { British	43,787	0 0	—	43,787	0 0
24th Feb. 1795 { Foreign	68,329	0 0	23,500	91,829	0 0
Wine	122,217	0 0	11,500	133,717	0 0
Cocoa nuts and coffee	198,990	0 0	27,500	226,490	0 0
Sweets	24,093	0 0	—	24,093	0 0
17th March 1795, tea	5,943	0 0	—	5,943	0 0
7th December 1795, tobacco	211,832	0 0	—	211,832	0 0
18th April 1796, wine	141,585	0 0	20,000	161,585	0 0
	198,102	0 0	3,000	201,102	0 0

[ENGLAND. | SCOTLAND. | TOTAL.

ARTICLES.	ENGLAND.		SCOTLAND.		TOTAL.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
20th May, 1796, sweets —	6,115	0 0	—	—	6,115	0 0
8th December 1796 { Cocoa nuts	2,839	0 0	—	—	2,839	0 0
— { Tea	159,258	0 0	—	—	159,258	0 0
10th December 1796, British spirits	59,778	0 0	33,000	—	92,778	0 0
Ditto — Foreign ditto	69,654	0 0	—	—	69,654	0 0
29th December 1796 { Auctions	21,805	0 0	—	—	21,805	0 0
— { Bricks	7,973	0 0	—	—	7,973	0 0
Amount of perpetual duties	8,653,641	15 1½	446,000	—	9,099,641	15 1½
Malt, annual	674,113	0 0	8,000	—	682,113	0 0
TOTAL	9,327,754	15 1½	454,000	—	9,781,754	15 1½

Excise Office, London,
10th November 1798.

J.A. WEBB, Accountant General.

AN ACCOUNT of the Total Net Produce of the STAMP
DUTIES, for One Year, ended the 10th October 1798.

	£.	s.	d.
Consolidated duties	548,488	11	8
Insurance, 1782	1,32,495	3	5
Plate, 1784	24,542	4	9
Race-horse, 1784	656	19	7
Stage, &c. duty, 1785	207,738	2	3
Medicine, 1785	11,653	17	9
Game, 1785	36,317	17	4
Attornies, 1785	41,119	3	6
Pawnbrokers, 1785	4,514	5	1
Perfumery, 1786	2,479	11	2
Scotch duty, 1786	1,345	0	2
Additional game, 1791	17,438	1	3
Bills of exchange, 1791	126,106	16	8
Receipts, 1791	47,464	11	0
Additional attornies' clerks, 1794	16,760	1	4
Hair-powder certificates, 1795	157,678	6	3
Additional stamps, 1795	31,777	18	3
Additional receipts, 1795	7,278	3	5
Sea policies, 1795	96,059	8	9
Horse-dealers' licences, 1795	1,217	3	8
Legacies, 1796	82,684	18	5
Hats, 1796	50,895	14	9
Additional duty on stage coaches, 1797	53,110	8	10
Deeds, &c. 1797	547,959	15	0
Armorial duty, 1798	7,373	0	0
Apprentice duty, 1710	7,005	7	9
	£. 2,262,160	12	0

Stamp Office,
10th November, 1798.

CH. STEDMAN,

Deputy Comptroller and
Accomptant General.

An ACCOUNT of the Total Net Produce paid into the Exchequer, of the DUTIES under the Head of INCIDENTS; distinguishing, as far as possible, in each Branch, the Produce on every separate Article, the Duties on which shall have amounted to One Thousand Pounds, or more, in the Four Quarters ended the 10th Day of October 1798.

	£.	s.	d.
Consolidated letter money	658,000	0	0
Ditto salt	446,702	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
Seizures	49,150	15	10
6d. per lib. on pensions	52,693	0	0
1s. per lib. on salaries	68,705	16	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Houses and windows	339,055	18	0 $\frac{1}{4}$
Inhabited houses	172,873	17	4
Hawkers and pedlars	5,719	3	6
Hackney coaches and chairs	24,000	0	0
Male servants	112,934	13	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Four-wheeled carriages	167,897	15	10
Two-wheeled carriages	51,834	1	9
Horses	135,403	6	2 $\frac{3}{4}$
First Fruits	3,549	9	0
Tenths	9,872	5	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Alienation duty	1,798	19	4
Lottery licences	2,433	3	6
	2,302,624	6	3 $\frac{3}{4}$

The produce of duties under 1,000l.
within the same period amounts to

1,731	2	0
£. 2,304,355	8	3 $\frac{3}{4}$

MONEY paid by Claude Scott, on account of corn, &c. sold for the use of Government	£.	s.	d.
Ditto by Abraham Newland, on account of the Com- missioners of Exchequer bills	65,000	0	0
Ditto by Abraham Newland, being an excess of interest on 194,000l. in Exchequer bills	37,300	0	0
Ditto by Edward Roberts, being the residue of Ex- chequer fees, applicable to the consolidated fund	576	11	4
	53,963	6	4

	£.	s.	d.
MONEY paid by Messrs. Puget and Co. for interest on Irish annuities — — — —	228,302	1	8
Ditto by the Commissioners, for the sale of Dutch prizes — — — —	50,000	0	0
Ditto by George Rose, for post fines — — — —	1,796	0	9½
Ditto by Steven Davies, in part of a bond of 28l. — — — —	25	18	0
Ditto by William Mitford, on account of George Poyntz Ricketts, Governor of Barbadoes — — — —	393	7	3
Ditto by the right honourable William Pitt, transmitted by a person unknown — — — —	2	0	0
Ditto by Charles Townshend, for interest on tontines — — — —	220	11	0
Ditto by John Newman, in part of a penalty of 8l. — — — —	6	7	0
Ditto by John Charlton, agent to a corps of invalids — — — —	0	0	6

IMPREST MONEY repaid by the executors of Richard Rigby — — — —	38,506	5	7
Ditto by the executors of William Brummell, agent to the out pensioners of Chelsea Hospital — — — —	5,927	2	0
Ditto by Henry Heddane, secretary to Lord Cornwallis — — — —	54	8	10
Ditto by George Smith, agent for the Bahama Islands — — — —	19	1	5½
Ditto by the executors of Robert Pringle, Lieutenant-colonel of Royal Engineers — — — —	83	3	10
Ditto by Mathew Forster, commissary for stores at the Leeward Islands — — — —	1,410	4	8½
Ditto by John Carden, adjutant and quarter-master at Montreal — — — —	145	3	1
Ditto by Thomas Hattcup, commandant in North America — — — —	11	10	7
Ditto by Sir John Dalling, late governor of Jamaica — — — —	244	19	1½
Ditto by William Chinnery, agent for New South Wales — — — —	1,692	2	10
Ditto by Thomas Rudsdell, barrack-master at Corfica — — — —	64	9	7
Ditto repaid by Sir John Macnamara Hayes, physician in North America — — — —	344	11	9
Ditto by Henry Edward Fox, quarter-master-general — — — —	276	10	9½
Ditto by Thomas Bullock, agent for Senegambia — — — —	1,550	0	0
Ditto by Sir Thomas Shirley, for contingent expences at Dominica — — — —	38	4	9
Ditto by Alexander Davison, commissary to the army under Earl Moira — — — —	466	6	8
Ditto by William Macarmick, late Governor of Cape Breton — — — —	287	15	4½
Ditto by Henry Hughs, for printing the Journals of the House of Commons — — — —	19	4	9
Ditto by General Woodley — — — —	145	14	0
Ditto by the executors of J. Durand, by the hands of Joseph White — — — —	27,630	11	4
Ditto by C. Harrison, on account of Brigadier-general Hope — — — —	3,372	19	9

IMPRES
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Ditto by
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DEBATES.

395

	£.	s.	d.
IMPREST MONEY by John Hatfell, clerk to the House of Commons		192	16 9
Ditto by Samuel Bean, commissary to the army in South America		265	13 0
Ditto by William B. Clinton, barrack-master at Ply- mouth		79	0 6
Ditto by Thomas Cotton, late paymaster to the American Loyalists	1,700	0	0
Ditto by the representatives of the right honourable George Grenville, late treasurer of the Navy	3,984	6	5
Ditto by Thomas Buckholm, on account of John Buckholm, commissary general in the Medi- terranean	1,700	0	0
Ditto by Henry Edward Fox, administrator to Lord Holland, late paymaster of His Majesty's forces	5,000	0	0
Ditto by Lieutenant-colonel Twiss, commander of engineers in Canada	1,015	19	6½
Ditto by Thomas Lewis, on account of John Ma- comb, treasurer to the army with General Bur- goyne		40	1 7½
	533,854	12	5½
	2,304,355	8	3½
	£. 2,838,210	0	9½

Exchequer, the 26th
day of November 1798.

Examined by

GRENVILLE.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Saturday, December 22.

Viscount BELGRAVE rose, and said he felt it due to his own consistency, as well as to the respect which he owed the House, to say a few words on the subject of the Treating Bill, as it was called, which he had the honour of introducing last year, but which, after passing through that House, had been rejected in the House of Lords. He assured the House that he had not abandoned his intention of bringing the matter again forward; but he had hitherto kept it back on account of the pressure and importance of the public business; but after the approaching holidays, he meant to revive the discussion of the subject, convinced, as he was, that something should be done in some way or other to remove those doubts and intricacies which the Treating Bill, in its present form, had occasioned. He was not as yet determined whether what he meant to bring forward should be introduced in the shape of a bill or of resolutions.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the House to proceed in a Committee on the Income Bill.

Mr. TIERNEY asked the Minister, whether it was his intention to bring on the consideration of the report on Wednesday? It could not be in the hands of gentlemen until that day, and therefore there would be no time to consider it until Thursday at the least, for Christmas-day was no day of business. He was not speaking for himself, for he wanted no time, but there were others in a different situation, who had gone into the country, who did not care to attend the detail of the measure in the Committees, but who waited to see the whole printed, and who wished to speak upon the subject once for all. An honourable friend of his he knew in particular to have been gone into the country, and who wished to speak upon this subject after the report was made, but he could not be prepared for that purpose without seeing what sort of a thing the bill was when the Committee had done with it, and which he could not learn by post before Thursday. Under these impressions, he hoped he was not asking too much of the goodness of the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he begged that the report might stand for Friday, and the third reading of the bill for Monday. It was said, indeed, that all the proceedings on the bill would be ready for delivery on Monday, but that could hardly be the case. It was now Saturday night, and he did not presume that the printers would labour on Sunday. He might, indeed, be justified in desiring the bill to be post-

poned altogether until after the holidays, but that he did not press; he only asked for a day or two, which might very well be granted, especially when the House was so thin.

Mr. Chancellor PITT wished the bill to be discussed upon the report, or upon the third reading. There was no surprise to be complained of in this case, for it was well known that all the bill was gone through except the cases annexed to the schedule, which could not be expected to occupy much time; after which the new clauses were to be produced, and, as the whole was expected to be printed, there was nothing very remarkable in seeing the House was but thinly attended. He should be happy to accommodate any gentleman, but it must be recollected, not only that the convenience of that House, but also of another House of Legislature, ought to be attended to, and it was now clear that they could not enjoy the holidays until the bill was discussed, or else it must be put off till a very inconvenient season. He stood in the same situation as the honourable gentleman, for he had no personal convenience to accommodate; nor did he see why the honourable gentleman, so laudably diligent himself as a Member of Parliament, could have any fellow feeling for seceders of any kind; and, indeed, the gentleman to whom he alluded was only a qualified seceder, who, although he did not chuse personally to attend the House, was yet willing to receive intelligence of its proceedings by post. He expected the bill and all the clauses to be ready for delivery on Monday.

Mr. TIERNEY observed, that the first payment of the bill was not until the 5th of June, and therefore there was time for the operation of the bill.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the reason assigned by the honourable gentleman for delay was a very good one for expedition in this measure, for the very idea for fixing the first payment under the bill so far off as the fifth of June, implied that between the passing of it, and the first payment, there ought to be considerable time, and therefore there ought to be as little delay in the progress of the bill as possible; and the truth indeed was, that on account of various arrangements, of appointing first and second Commissioners, making out lists, examining returns, classing them, and various other business preparatory to the first payment, the time between that and passing the bill, would not, with all the diligence the Legislature could use, be thought too long, and therefore he could not agree to any delay in this case.

The question was then put, and the House went into a Committee upon the bill.

On the clause containing rules for estimating income arising from personal property, and from trades, professions, offices, &c. the word "Stipend" was added.

"The value to be taken at not less than the full amount of the profits or gains within the preceding year, or, at the election of the person charged, at a sum not less than the fair and just average for one year, of the profits or gains in the three years preceding." The blank was proposed to be filled up with the words, the 31st of December, or when the accounts of such income are usually made up.

Mr. H. THORNTON said it was the object of the bill that, if possible, a man who had a fluctuating income should pay to the exigencies of the State in the same proportion as the person who enjoyed a stated income. To prevent evasion, he proposed, that when a person had once made his election, whether he should pay according to the full amount of profit within the preceding year, or for an average of three years, he should not be at liberty afterwards to vary the election he had made.

Mr. Alderman COMBE objected, if the honourable gentleman meant, that because a person chose to be taxed according to the average of the three preceding years before the passing of the act, that he should always be bound to pay according to the estimate first given in.

Mr. Chancellor PITT thought they should ever after abide by their first election.

Mr. WILBERFORCE vindicated his honourable friend from the charge of throwing any imputation on commercial men. Evasion, it must be confessed, was, and might be practised, and the best mode of preventing it, would be to take away the possibility of exercising it with success.

Sir FRANCIS BARING said, that by not allowing the option annually, many cases of extreme hardship must necessarily arise, which would not occur, if men were left to their election, as often as a new statement of their income should be required.

Mr. Alderman CURTIS was of opinion, that the alternative was not intended as a boon to commercial men, but as a fair and equitable mode of ascertaining their income, and that no mode could so securely guard against evasion as that of restoring men to their first election. In the other case, persons might easily shape and shuffle their books so as to make false entries and fallacious balances, and thereby defraud the revenue. Already evasion had prevailed, within his own knowledge; he was convinced it would occur again if not prevented.

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Sir FRANCIS BARING objected, not only to the restriction contended for, but to the limitation of the average of three years. The same motives which governed the Committee in ascertaining the amount of income from mines, should also direct them on the present question. In that case it was extended to the average of five years, which included the unfortunate year of 1793. A multitude of people, in which himself was included, were then very much hurt in their property, beyond what the two succeeding years could retrieve, and therefore he thought that period should be included within the space in which the average income was to be ascertained.

Mr. TIERNEY reprobated the frequent use of the term "evasion," and thought a great variety of cases of hardship might be put, if the average was to be made on three years. Evasion was an harsh phrase, and ought not to be dealt out so liberally. Many men felt themselves so hard pressed in respect to their families, and had so much reason to complain of the weight of taxes, that they must feel themselves honestly and conscientiously justifiable in trying whether, without violating the letter of the law, they might not avoid a part of the burden. He did not blame the honourable gentleman for endeavouring to make his tax as productive as possible; but no harsh expressions should, however, be applied to men, particularly where some could not afford to contribute to the extent required; and with others the reflection might arise, that the money would not be applied as well as they could wish; or where, perhaps, the consideration of both principles might prevail. He did not blame the honourable gentleman for making the rule as strict as possible, as he had before stated; at the same time he highly approved of enlarging the average to five years, agreeable to the suggestion of the worthy Baronet.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, if the honourable gentleman was right in supposing that conscientious men would think themselves justifiable in taking every advantage to evade the tax, it was the more incumbent on him to make the letter of the law so strict that its spirit should not be evaded. That any consideration of the mode in which the money would be applied, should enter into the contemplation of the subject when called upon for the payment, he could not conceive; but if so, this, as furnishing another pretext for evasion, was a farther reason for guarding against it. As to the average of five years, it only multiplied the objections to the mode proposed of leaving a man at liberty to adopt the average of three, whenever he should think proper, as all those who, within these three years, had risen to a flourishing state in trade and business, of whom, in

the rapid progress of improvement, there were many instances, would be too much favoured by giving them the advantage of the preceding years, when their income might have been very inconsiderable.

Mr. WILBERFORCE dwelt much upon evasion, and the necessity of preventing men, who would selfishly enjoy all the comforts of life, without contributing in their due proportion to their preservation, from the farther practice of such an illiberal system.

Mr. TIERNEY said, it was a common saying, that tricks which were fair in love were also fair in taxation; that is, that every advantage which could, might be taken. So he might suppose many conscientious men would think themselves justified to take every advantage of this law, not to evade the letter of it, but its heavy effects. But he could illustrate this more precisely. It had lately occurred that a very distinguished person thought it neither a sin nor a shame to evade his proportion at the period of the triple assessment. He possessed an handsome pension, but having in view the certainty of a place of much greater emolument, he resigned the pension, and took advantage of the interval to include neither the one nor the other in his return. The person alluded to, he said, now held a considerable office, and that the honourable gentleman need not look far for him, as he might be found among his most intimate acquaintance.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, if the case was put as a real one, it deserved the most serious attention, and called upon the honourable gentleman to name the person.

Mr. TIERNEY declined to do so.

Lord HAWKESBURY rose, and insisted the person alluded to should be named. If the honourable gentleman undertook to state a case of that nature, he thought he should not refuse to specify particulars. He ought to be prepared to disclose the whole case, or not mention it at all.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he would not have stated what he did without reason. He had it from respectable authority, but confessed he did not consider himself justifiable in mentioning the name until he should make farther inquiry, nor did he really think it of such great importance to be taken up so *warmly*.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the honourable gentleman might do an injury by declining to name the person, whereas, if he did name the person, none could arise in the want of his being mistaken. If, however, he would not specify particulars, by stating the name, the place, and the authority, he must consider the statement totally unfounded. The honourable gentleman had said, the person alluded to was an officer of considerable consequence, and

that if he looked about he could find him in a narrow circle. For his part, if he was to recollect, he must say he did know an instance, and only one, of a person who had lately relinquished a pension, and received an office of considerable consequence; but if the allusion was meant to apply to him, the honourable gentleman had been most grossly deceived; for, from his personal knowledge, and from facts also, he could aver the personage meant had paid his full proportion, making no other deduction than what he was justly and fairly entitled to, amounting to one tenth; but that personage did not rest there, for he doubled that sum in voluntary contribution; so that instead of a tenth, he actually paid a fifth of his whole income.

Mr. Alderman COMBE confessed he had heard the same rumour as the honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney); at the same time he must add, that he believed it to be unfounded.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he was ready to agree to the proposition of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt); and if the House should hear no more on the subject, that his statement should be supposed unfounded.

Mr. PERCIVAL expressed a wish that the subject had not been mentioned. He remarked, that the honourable gentleman had spoken as if many conscientious persons thought no harm (to use his expression) of "tricking in love, or tricking the Public." What the honourable gentleman's idea was of conscience he knew not; but, for his part, he should consider such conduct as unquestionably immoral.

Mr. BANKS, alluding to what had been said, that if the House heard no farther upon the subject, they ought to suppose it to be unfounded, conceived that it was not sufficient. If it should prove to be unfounded, the honourable gentleman ought to retract the charge as publicly as he had made it. With regard to the person who had been whispered about, he happened to know that, in addition to the payment of his fair proportion to the tax, he had given a contribution.

Mr. TIERNEY said, whenever he was convinced that upon any subject he was wrong, he had not the least hesitation to avow it; but he must say that the honourable gentleman who had spoken last, could hardly expect that he should acknowledge himself to be wrong without inquiry. But gentlemen seemed to him really to have taken up the subject too seriously. With regard to the person alluded to, he begged the honourable Member under him not to construe him to have whispered his name to any one; at the same time he had not the least objection to inquire into the circumstance, and,

having so inquired, to satisfy the right honourable gentleman. But with respect to being put thus to the torture, it was what he could not submit to. He repeated that he had not the least hesitation to state the result of his investigation to the right honourable gentleman privately, if he wished it.

Mr. Chancellor PITT declared that it was not with a view to place the honourable Member in any disagreeable situation that he mentioned the subject. He mentioned it because he thought it a point of importance, and he felt and believed that the honourable gentleman had stated it as an illustration. He could not help, however, being of opinion, that if he had thought more upon it, he would not have stated it as an illustration; but he could not accept of the explanation which had been given. He wished, however, to save trouble to all parties. If the honourable Member inquired into the circumstances, and found nothing in it, the House were to think, if they heard no more upon it, that there was nothing in it. But though the honourable Member had not whispered the name of the person, yet he found that it had reached other persons, though it had not reached him. He took it, that it was meant to be stated, that the person had not included in his statement the pension he had relinquished, nor the office he was on the point of accepting. The instance to which the whisper, he had been informed, seemed to point, was that of the person who had been appointed one of His Majesty's Postmasters General; and here he could save the honourable Member trouble, by stating plainly and decisively, that whatever the quarter was from which he had received the intelligence, he was deceived. So far from the fact being true, he could assert that that person had given in his income as high as it could be given in; that he had only claimed the exceptions to which he was fairly entitled by law, and that having so done, he had doubled the tenth, and thus paid a fifth. The person to whom he meant to allude was the person who had been last appointed one of the Postmasters General.

Mr. SMITH, the chairman, said, that he hoped the Committee would be of opinion, that as the circumstance had been mentioned, he had not acted improperly in suffering the discussion to proceed to the length it had done. He believed, however, it would now be as clear to the Committee, that it was time to resume the original subject before them, and therefore he must recall their attention to the clauses of the bill.

In that part of the trade clause which gave the trader an option of returning the income of a year, or an average of three years,

Mr. Thornton proposed that the option once made should be abided by. On which,

Mr. Alderman COMBE said, that he certainly must object to that alteration; for it went to an entire departure from that principle of alleviation which he always thought that clause contained. To his mind the greatest objection to the bill was, that uncertain and temporary income was taxed to the same amount as permanent income, and the precariousness of the income of traders was greater than any other; he thought therefore the option at first given to traders of selecting the income of the last preceding year, or on the average of three years, was meant by the framers of the bill to correct in some measure the inequality of its operation with respect to those who must endure much hardship by it; he hoped, therefore, that the Committee would permit that to remain as it stood, viz. That the option should be annual.

In that part where deductions were to be allowed to traders,

Mr. Alderman COMBE said, that as it had been confessed that this bill branched out from the principle of that which had last year passed for the accumulated assessed taxes, and certainly contained much of its hardships, he hoped that it would also contain a portion of that lenient spirit towards a particular class of people which the right honourable gentleman was last year induced to give—he meant the retail shopkeepers. Gentlemen must know that, in choosing their residence, manufacturers will settle where labour is abundant, where rent is low, where fuel is plenty, or where provisions are cheap; but the shopkeeper, who sells to the public the articles of manufactory, cannot have much election—he must have a shop in a populous street, that shop must make a handsome appearance to shew off the articles it exhibits, in order to catch the attention of passengers. The shopkeeper himself, as well as his assistants, must be more particular in their dress and appearance than those whose business does not require continual intercourse with their customers, and the high-rented house which they occupy cannot be considered but as an article or implement of trade, and is as much so as their weights and scales, or their measures—he trusted, therefore, that the Committee would consider this class of traders, and grant them some alleviation—for which purpose he moved, that after the few words general deduction, should be added—“and the amount of rent of such houses and warehouses as belong to tenants of retail shops, and are inhabited by retail traders.”

The schedule being gone through,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he came now to the new clauses; but as he had already stated the substance of them, and as they

seemed to meet the concurrence of the House, he should not enter at any length into them now. But there was one material clause which he had not stated before ; the clause for making allowances for children. In the original statement which he had submitted to the House, gentlemen would recollect he had suggested the propriety of making the allowances for children larger than they were in the Assessed-tax Bill. In that bill there were no allowances made for a fewer number than four children ; the scale then rose from four to eight, and from eight to ten. In the first case, an allowance was made of ten per cent. ; in the second, fifteen ; in the third, twenty per cent. But it seemed to him a much more convenient and desirable thing to make an allowance for each child, even for one child. In the next place, he should propose that a deduction should be made according to classes of income, which was not proposed to be made on other cases under the bill. The presumption upon which the Committee went was, that whatever was an additional expence, ought to be made a deduction from the taxable income of a person as far as related to children. The Committee would probably be of opinion, that in this there ought to be made a distinction of classes of income. He should, therefore, suggest that a deduction should be made of five per cent. from the income for each child, in the class of income from sixty pounds a year to four hundred. The effect of this would be, that there would be five per cent. for each child, and that the highest case of ten children, which gave only twenty per cent. in the Assessed-tax Bill, would in this bill give fifty per cent. This deduction, then, would be more than double what it had been proposed to be last year. The second class of income was from 400l. to 1000l. a year, upon which he proposed that there should be an allowance of four per cent. on the income of each child. The third class was from 1,000l. to 5,000l. a year, upon which he suggested that the allowance should be 3 per cent for each child ; and that all income above 5,000l. a year should have no more than 2 per cent. for each child. This was the substance of the clause which he meant to submit to the Committee with respect to children ; and he trusted gentlemen would see that, without any departure from any principle upon which the measure was founded, it was a proper modification, and was calculated to afford substantial relief to those valuable classes, where relief was most wanted.

Mr. SPEAKER said—I cannot forbear, Sir, from expressing the great satisfaction I have received from the proposition which has just been submitted to us ; a satisfaction which, I am persuaded, the Committee will participate with me. Every gentleman, Sir, must

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be sensible that the relief proposed to be afforded is a great and substantial one. In so comprehensive a measure as the present, it is fruitless to suppose that great hardships will not be felt; it is fruitless to imagine that considerable inconveniences will not occur. The House could not foresee all the difficulties that might arise; and even if they could foresee them, I trust they would not provide for all of them, because, if they did, they would defeat the efficacy and equity of the measure. Sir, we must take our stand upon a fixed principle: and from that we must not depart. The principle of the present measure is to raise a tenth of every man's income, as far as it is practicable. By that principle I am happy to see the Committee are determined to abide. If, indeed, they were to depart from it, they would fritter away the measure altogether. In carrying this principle into execution, we must be governed by duty, or rather governed by a correct view of the interests of individuals. The foundation upon which my right honourable friend has proposed this modification is, that children absorb a larger proportion of a small income than of a large one. This is true in fact; and the adoption of it will not subject the House to any inconveniences. When the Committee consider what is the description of persons to whom this benevolence is proposed to be extended, I am sure that their satisfaction will be equal to my own. It will relieve many gentlemen who live in the country upon small incomes—it will relieve many persons who, with such credit to themselves and such advantage to the country, have formed themselves into yeomanry and volunteer corps—above all, Sir, it will afford relief to that most valuable and most respectable class of men, the clergy, who live upon small livings and have large families; they must excite in a peculiar degree the attention and protection of the House; they are bound from a sense of what is due to their situation, they are stimulated by a knowledge of the sacredness of their functions, they are excited by the education which they have received, to maintain a stile of life beyond their income, but not beyond their respectability. To them the relief will be a most important one. Sir, to those who have taken the pains to look at all to the practice of our ancestors, it must be matter of pride and exultation to find that it is only in late times that these ideas of modification have been adopted. Let gentlemen look to the catalogue of former taxes; let them look to the tenths, the fifteenths, the scutage, the tallages, and the assessments of those times, and they will find in none of them such modifications as have been introduced in very recent periods. Let the House recollect that no distinctions were taken by those who preceded us. Then, Sir, let gentlemen see that when as much as four shil-

lings in the pound was laid upon real, and two shillings and sixpence upon moveable property, no ideas of distinctions and descriptions of property were ever introduced into the House. Look when the land tax was adopted as a substitute for the subsidies, then see that it operated as a poundage upon all persons. Look at those things, and then view the principle of this modification, which affords substantial relief where it is most wanted. I should be sorry, Sir, to see this great measure encumbered and frittered away by modifications; for by the adoption of it, the necessity for loans, which operate as a perpetual burden upon the country, will be done away, and the depreciation of public credit prevented. A contest has been long maintained between this country and France. The best way, in my conscience, I believe, to shorten it, is, to shew that we are prepared for carrying it on. We were first attacked upon our principles, and then the enemy hoped to find an ally in the alienation of the minds of the people from the Constitution. In that hope, and in that design, they were repelled by the good sense and firmness of the nation. Their next attempt was upon the independence of the country. They threatened Great Britain with the same ruin and devastation which have marked their progress in all other countries; but the effect of that menace was to raise the country to a man. They derived other hopes; they were encouraged by the depreciation of public credit, and by the amount of the public debt, which, perhaps not unreasonably, has been denominated the best ally of the enemy. It is in the power of the House to meet, if not to dissolve, that alliance. Sir, I should be sorry to see any thing adopted to impair the principle of a tax, which, I believe in my conscience, will go farther to animate those whom it is our interest to animate, and to carry dismay into the hearts of the enemy, than even the victories we have gained, or that recent one of which neither we nor our posterity can ever speak without the warmest admiration and applause. I trust the effect of this measure will be to rouse, to stimulate, and to excite those who are to co-operate with us. These, Sir, are the sentiments which I shall always entertain. It would have been highly gratifying to my own mind, if I could have stated more at length what I feel upon the principle of the measure before us. The House will be aware that it is only in a Committee I can express my sentiments upon any subject. Sir, I sincerely rejoice at the modification which has been proposed, because, without infringing the principle of the bill, it is calculated to diminish the pressure where the pressure is most felt, and to afford relief where relief is most wanted.

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Sir W. PULTENEY entertained no manner of doubt that the modification proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give great satisfaction to the country in general ; but though he, as highly as any one, approved the modification, he could not avoid still being averse to the principle of the bill. His objection was not to the amount of the sum to be raised ; on the contrary, he thought every man in the country ought to contribute to its defence and support in the present arduous contest in which it was engaged, as largely as his means would enable him ; but his fears were how far this bill encroached upon the principles of the Constitution. The sum to be raised no one would object to ; but if, by the mode of raising it, we violated the principles of the Constitution, every man in the country ought to set his face against it. The advantages to be obtained by raising the money would be too dearly purchased. On this subject he should have a more favourable opportunity of expressing his sentiments when the report was considered. With regard to the new clauses it was impossible at present to say any thing, but he considered they would be open to discussion, and that the House, by receiving them in silence, was not precluded from considering the propriety of them hereafter. Farther observations he would postpone till he saw the bill printed, repeating only, that he did not object to the sum, but that he considered the mode of raising it unconstitutional. On that ground he should take his stand, and on that ground alone should he oppose the bill.

Right honourable D. RYDER said, it was extremely painful to his feelings to make the smallest objection to a species of modification which seemed to flow from the principles of humanity ; but he was apprehensive the degree to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had carried it, might prove prejudicial to the principle of the bill. It was necessary the House should cautiously guard against extending the reductions in such a manner as to defeat the object of the measure. He was of opinion the reduction in favour of persons with families ought not to extend to those whose incomes amounted to 1,000*l.* a year, unless they had three children at the least. He also thought a distinction ought to be made in the scale of reduction, according to the ages of the children.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he had not proposed the modification but from a firm impression, that it was as much founded in policy as in justice and humanity. Its operation, on the one hand, would prevent the tax exceeding the bounds of what persons, in every situation in life, ought to contribute ; and, on the other, would in no respect be injurious to the principle of the measure, but would rather extend it by alleviating the pressure of the burden

of those who, from the circumstance of their having families to provide for, were most entitled to relief. He hoped, whatever doubts gentlemen might have with respect to the modification, they would suspend them till the clause was printed, when, he was persuaded, that, attending to the proposed relief, with reference to its justice, and applying every degree of caution to protect the principle of the bill, they would, in both respects, find it entitled to their fullest approbation. He differed from the honourable gentleman, who thought the relief ought not to apply to persons of 1000*l.* a year income, with less than three children. When he regarded the situation of merchants, and gentlemen of 1,000*l.* a year, who had sons to whom they were obliged to give expensive educations, or daughters to whom it was necessary to give portions suitable to their expectations, he conceived they were equally entitled to relief with persons in more humble situations of life, and particularly as they did not derive that aid from their children which the poor classes of people, in many cases, did. With respect to the distinction proposed by the honourable gentleman, according to the different ages of children, he was not aware how it could be made with the least uniformity; for it was obvious the children of the poor were most expensive to their parents when young, and the expense was comparatively nothing when they advanced in years; whereas, in the higher classes, the effect was precisely the reverse, for there the expence of children, when young, was trifling, but proportionably heavy when it became necessary to establish them in life. It was in consequence of his not being able to make any distinction between the higher and lower classes, with respect to their relative claims to relief on the score of their families, that he had adopted one uniform system of reduction. He had proposed this modification as the best result which, under all circumstances, he had been enabled to draw. He desired the House to examine the clause attentively, applying all that caution which had been recommended; but at the same time bearing in mind, that every shilling taken from that class of the public that had families to provide for was taken from those to whom it was for the best interests of society to extend relief.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, the proposition met his most cordial support. He believed it would obviate the pressure of the burden where relief was most wanted, and render the measure altogether not less worthy, on the general score of policy, than on the principle of humanity.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL observed, that it was the principle of taxation acknowledged in this country, that the situation, income, and property of persons, should be so considered, that

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taxes should not have the effect of materially lessening the one or the other; and for this reason it was necessary to make deductions in the higher as well as the lower classes. It was on this general rule the principle of the modification proceeded. It was impossible to descend to particulars; and he wished the Committee to consider, whether it would not be rendering the modification altogether impracticable, if they were to load it with distinctions. The principle of relief ought to be general, and the Committee would do wrong to have recourse to those minutiae which could never be followed up without entangling the whole of the measure. Though the children of one class might not be so expensive as those of another, yet the difference was to be balanced by future expences. He repeated, that the Committee ought not to make minute distinctions, but rather to consider the great and general object of relief proposed by the clause, in which, after all, it was impossible but there must remain considerable imperfections.

Mr. SPEAKER again rose and expressed his approbation of the clause, and the mode of relief held out by it; he pointed out the justice of it, by comparing it with the practice of our ancestors. There were two species of modification recognised in the outset of the discussion of this bill; one referring to the description of income, the other to the amount; neither of these had ever been adopted by those legislators who had formerly levied taxes in this House. The earlier mode of levying taxes in this country was by tenths and fifteenths. These were levied without distinction, nor was there any reduction made on account of the situation of those who were to pay them. To this succeeded Knight's service, which was general throughout the country, and commuted for by a tax denominated scutage or tallage. In the mode of levying these taxes, there were none of those beneficial distinctions which characterised the measure now before the House. This mode of taxation gave place to subsidies, which was an assessment of not less than four shillings in the pound on real property, and two shillings in the pound on moveables. This was levied without reference to description or domestic situation of persons. During the time of the Protectorship, when the unhappy disputes existed between the King and his Parliament, the Parliament levied weekly contributions on the inhabitants, he would not say the subjects, because they had no monarch at that time to whom they paid that obedience their duty required. These exactions were made to the enormous amount of 120,000*l.* a month, according to the arbitrary will of the assessors, without any modification whatever. When the land tax, which took place of subsidies, was adopted, four shillings in

the pound was levied indiscriminately, without any regard to the income of the person on whom it was raised, or any reference to the number of their families. Merchants, at all times, continued to pay their poundage on insurance without any deduction. The poor's rates had always been levied without any discrimination; the number of a man's family never being in contemplation. With respect to the modification proposed, it appeared to him not only congenial to the feelings of humanity, but perfectly in unison with the principle of the measure. If he thought it in the least operated against the principle on which the bill proceeded, he would implore the House to reject it; but, he was persuaded, in such case, there would be no occasion for his arguments, the dictates of their duty and their own feelings would be sufficient to induce them to disapprove of it; and he believed the House best promoted the happiness of the community, by the strict discharge of their duty, without regard to other considerations. Upon every principle of expediency and policy, they were bound, as men and senators, to provide for the relief of those persons to whom the clause in question particularly referred.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL observed, that the principle of modification, as applied to distinction of persons, was recognised in the reign of the Plantagenets; but he admitted it was abandoned during the reign of the Stuarts.

Mr. SPEAKER replied, that that observation only applied to the Poll Tax.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he had a great variety of clauses to offer; but he believed it would be more for the accommodation of the Committee that they should be given in without entering into any detail as to their objects, unless any gentleman wished it otherwise.

After a few more observations from Mr. SMITH, Mr. ELLISON, and Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY, the clauses were received.

The report was afterwards brought up and received; the bill, with the amendments, ordered to be printed; and the report to be taken into consideration on Thursday next.

Wednesday, December 26.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day on the bill for continuing the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act; which being read, and it being for the bill going into a Committee,

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He moved that the Speaker do now leave the chair.

Mr. COURTENAY rose and said, he was now about to adduce additional reasons to shew there was no necessity for suspending the Habeas-Corpus Act any longer; and before he did so, he begged leave to read the declaration made by His Majesty in April:

“Whereas it appears that the preparation for the embarkation
“of troops and warlike stores are now carried on with considerable
“and increasing activity in the ports of France, Flanders, and
“Holland, with the avowed design of attempting the invasion of
“His Majesty’s dominions; and that in this the enemy is encouraged by the correspondence and communications of traitorous
“and disaffected persons and societies of these kingdoms.”

Here, he said, was a plain and candid reason assigned for the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act; but he would follow up this declaration of His Majesty upon that importation occasion, and ask, Whether the case was the same now as it was then? Were His Majesty’s enemies making any preparation for the invasion of these kingdoms? If they were, in what place, or in what manner, were they making such preparations? And, by whom were they aided and abetted in this country? He would ask one plain general question, were we now in the same situation as we were last year when the Habeas-Corpus Suspension Act was agreed to? Had not our enemies been baffled and discomfited in different parts of the world? Was it likely that the French would invade this country when it was scarcely probable that they should retain their present conquests?—The dominion of Britain was extended; the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas were annexed to her empire; and the glorious triumphs of her navy were celebrated in every quarter of the globe. We looked up with pride and gratitude to the renowned names of Nelson and Jervis, whose honours, though great, had scarcely kept pace with their merits. Their unparalleled exploits had even extended the fame and glory of the British navy; the brilliancy of their victories stood unrivalled in our triumphant annals. Skill and valour were happily united; and the science of the British Admirals was as distinguished as the intrepidity of the British sailors. Why then, at this auspicious period, suspend the Habeas-Corpus Act? Why fling this cloud of despotism over our eyes to obscure the glorious prospect? Indeed they had also served their country, in a most singular and unprecedented manner,—essentially and constitutionally—by introducing a species of Parliamentary Reform in this country. Being called by His Majesty into another House—the fresh laurels they had planted there—would

purify the vitiated atmosphere—tainted and corrupted by some blasts of putrid and azotic air—rescind from——

[A cry of “Order! Order!”—“Chair!”]

Mr. SPEAKER reminded Mr. Courtenay, that he was not speaking to the question before the House.

Mr. COURTENAY proceeded. He thought he might have been permitted to use a metaphorical expression, especially in praise of such distinguished men as Lords Nelson and Jervis, but he was corrected. He said, he should not have touched, perhaps, certainly he should not have dwelt upon this subject, had he not imagined that it arose naturally out of what had been said on a former debate upon this bill, and of which, in point of spirit, if not in strictness of language, this might be called a continuance. He must now advert to what had been said by an honourable and learned gentleman on the last debate upon this measure. That gentleman had stated some points, as if he (Mr. Courtenay) had misrepresented facts relative to the prisoners in Clerkenwell, wherein the State Prisoners are now confined. Gentlemen, in the discussion of this matter, had dwelt much on topics of general humanity, on which they thought proper to declaim a great deal, and assert many things—one word of which he did not deny. But he should now repeat what he had formerly asserted upon the subject. He had said, that men, committed either for treason, suspicion of treason, or treasonable practices, were confined in Clerkenwell House of Correction, in narrow penitentiary cells; and neither allowed fire, candle, books, or the usual indulgence to State Prisoners. He had asked able and experienced lawyers, whether this rigour was not unexampled in the administration of justice in this country? They had answered in the affirmative. These facts he had stated the other night—he was contradicted indeed—but was a single fact disproved? Did not the cells and miserable truckle beds exist? and was not fire and candle interdicted?—One learned gentleman had also charged him with arraigning Lord Kenyon's conduct in the King's Bench. This he denied. If Lord Kenyon had sentenced Smith, the bookseller, to seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years imprisonment for a libel, he would not have presumed to question the legality and justice of such a sentence. But he thought he might, without much impropriety, be permitted to state, what he should always think, a rigorous mode of carrying this sentence into effect. He had experienced the truth of the late Lord Chatham's observation: “Touch but a cobweb in Westminster hall, and the old spider will crawl out.” Another honourable gentleman had said, he had visited the prison himself, had examined the matter, and that he knew the

reports that had gone abroad upon it were unfounded. If that honourable gentleman was now in the House, he would ask him, if he was in this prison since the time of passing judgement on the person to whom he alluded? or whether he was there since the commitment of those who are there under the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act? Did he visit the prison? and was it, or was it not, in the situation which he had described? He asked that question. Now, as a corroboration of what he had formerly stated upon this matter, he begged to read, as part of his speech, a letter from the wife of Colonel Despard:

“ Some mention having been made in the newspaper reports of
“ the House of Commons relative to the treatment of Colonel
“ Despard in the New Prison, I think it necessary to state
“ that the Colonel was confined near seven months in a damp cell,
“ not seven feet square, without either fire or candle, chair, table,
“ knife, fork, a glazed window, or even a book to read. I made
“ several applications in person to Mr. Wickham, Under Secre-
“ tary of State, and by letter to the Duke of Portland—all to no
“ purpose. About the 20th of last month he was removed into a
“ room with a fire, but not until his feet were ulcerated by frost.
“ For the truth of this statement, I appeal to the honourable Mr.
“ Lawless, or John Reeves, Esq. who visited the Colonel in prison,
“ and at whose intercession he was removed.

“ I state these facts without the Colonel's knowledge, as even
“ his jailer will bear witness that he never made any complaint
“ of his treatment, however severe it was. The Colonel served
“ His Majesty thirty years, and all his family are now in the army.

“ Berkeley-square,

CATHARINE DESPARD.

“ December 23, 1798.”

It was very true that when he saw the Colonel he made no complaint to him. He asked the Colonel, if any distinction had been used in respect to him, or if he had been confined in the same manner, and in the same situation, as the other State Prisoners committed since the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act? He answered yes; that they had been all treated alike; and he had been confined to his cell, till removed by the humane interference of Mr. Reeves. If these things were not thus—if he was not to believe the letter of Mrs. Despard, nor to trust to the evidence of his own senses, but that both were deceptions upon him, all he could say upon the matter was, that it was very extraordinary. He knew Colonel Despard thirty years ago; he was then

in the service. An honourable gentleman had asked, if he had any sympathy with prisoners of this description? He understood, and held in contempt, the mean and malignant insinuation. He avowed, and always would avow, that he sympathised with the victims of oppression, who appeared to him to be treated tyrannically and inhumanly. If the persons who were confined in this prison, under the authority of this act, were guilty, let them be tried, and condemned; but if they were not guilty, let them be acquitted: at all events let them have a trial. To general declamation upon probable guilt, or suspicion of guilt, he paid no regard; nor did Christian rancour, or religious facetiousness, affect him: if there was any thing to be urged against these men, let it be specified: any man who demanded this, demanded nothing but justice; and any man who exerted himself to obtain that justice, deserved esteem for such exertion. At the time, when this matter was first mentioned, he did not believe that His Majesty's Ministers knew it; but it now appeared that application was made for Colonel Despard without effect, therefore Ministers must have known it. He had said, he was sure they did not know it. He begged pardon of the House for having led it into that mistake; but he believed that was the only instance in which he imposed upon the House. But some gentlemen had insisted that these things could not be as they were related; and an honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) had displayed much religious facetiousness, tempered with Christian rancour, on the subject. He had triumphantly asked, Whether it could be believed that such atrocious inhumanity had been exercised? The alledged facts were the best refutation. Yet, said Mr. Courtenay, if we are to believe a certain Christian moralist, (considering the depraved state of human nature), all this is very probable. "That prosperity," says he, "hardens the heart; that unlimited power is always abused, instead of diffusing human happiness; that our nature is corrupt; that the imagination of our hearts is continually evil; that we have to contend, not only with our natural depravity, but with the power of darkness, the evil spirit, whose dominion is so general as to entitle him to the denomination of the Prince of Darkness." He observed, that a worthy Magistrate had stated, that the prison which he alluded to was not originally designed for persons of this description, and that their being sent there was matter of necessity; but if it was necessary to send them to this place, there was no necessity of treating them with inhumanity when they were in it. Why could not a proper house be hired for this, as for any other purpose? Did gentlemen believe that the people of this country, who afforded thirty and forty millions a year for the public service, would begrudge three or four hun-

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dred for the maintenance of prisoners? Was it to be supposed that the loyalty of a people, who are, to the number of 300,000 in arms in defence of their country, would be affected by the expence of a few hundreds of pounds for such a purpose as this; and, indeed, for the purpose of common humanity? Did any one suppose that the people would obscure their lustre, and tarnish their glory, by meanly withholding a small sum of money to support a few prisoners? He said, that in his opinion the complaints of abuse of the power given to Government by this act, might logically be urged against its renewal. He had stated these facts, because he believed them to be true; but if they should be proved to be false, he should be very happy to retract them.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL said, that the honourable gentleman had alluded to what he had said in a former debate. He certainly did complain that such respect was not paid as ought to have been paid to the Court of King's Bench in taking notice of the case of an individual of the name of Smith for publishing a libel called "the Duties of Citizenship." He made some observations on that case, and he would repeat, that the Court of King's Bench did not order Smith to be sent to that prison until after they had been well assured that it was a fit and proper place to receive him. They did it in the execution of an important duty which they owed the public, and which duty they discharged conscientiously; and the honourable gentleman, who talked so much of cruelty, would give him leave to say, that he knew of no cruelty so harsh as that of a Member of Parliament endeavouring to call forth the public indignation on persons who stand in a situation of great difficulty as well as importance, without examining the case on which they speak. If that honourable gentleman had applied to him he would have given him all the grounds on which he opposed these assertions against the prison in question, and also why he supported this bill. He would likewise tell the honourable gentleman, that there was no cruelty more harsh than that of a Member of Parliament stating in his speech as an authentic account, something that he had seen in a newspaper to the prejudice of any public officer, or any other individual. Such was the case here in regard to the conduct of the Duke of Portland and of Mr. Wickham; the honourable gentleman had not even the report of the jailer of the prison upon the subject. As to Colonel Despard, he was a man who had been long in the service of his country most certainly, and who, from inquiry made this day, appeared to have conducted himself well in his confinement. The report of the case of this gentleman, as stated this night, was taken from a letter published in the newspa-

pers. He hoped he was not out of order when he said it was fitting that all persons, from one end of the kingdom to the other, should know that they are not justified in retailing any thing that is to the prejudice of others, more especially when it is immediately injurious to the public character of those who are entrusted with important public offices, merely because they see it in some newspaper; and he must also be permitted to observe, that the editor of the *Courier*, when he was not publicly known, inserted in that paper that most detestable libel upon the case of the Liverpool prisoners, for which he made only this apology, that his humanity would not permit him to omit inserting such a case; which mode of reasoning would amount to this—that if any body sent a letter from Paris accusing the Attorney General, or any other public officer of something directly opposite to his duty, it ought to be inserted if there was in it any allegation that somebody had been treated with inhumanity; and although he did not say that a thing is to be disbelieved, because it is inhuman, yet he would say it was detestable inhumanity to believe it for no other reason than because it was inhuman, and the more especially if there was no better authority for it than a newspaper, and he did not know where there could be worse. In this case there was two considerations brought forward, or rather involved, by the speech of the honourable gentleman. First, what had been the conduct of the Duke of Portland and of Mr. Wickham? Secondly, what had been the regulation of the jail itself? And here he must beg permission to say, that he hoped he was not more inhuman than others; and he hoped the national characteristic of humanity was not altered; but still, notions of humanity alone should not be acted upon against the very principles which had for ages been acted upon, and had been deemed the cement that had held so well together. It had, upon these principles, been always held that persons committed for high treason, or suspicion of high treason, should be kept ‘safe and close;’ and therefore, however apparently harsh it might be, to put a person only accused in a situation in which he could not converse with others, yet it was a condition inseparable from the nature of the thing; and he believed there never had occurred a single instance, or very rarely if there had, in which any one individual had met with more rigour than absolute necessity demanded. There had been something said about the wives and friends of some prisoners being refused access to them. By the way, there were some wives who had met with much indulgence, in not being taken up and confined as well as their husbands. He then came to consider the letter which had been published in the name of Mrs. Despard. Having read the letter he proceeded to shew

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what had been done in the case of this gentleman. Some complaints having been made to the Duke of Portland relative to the situation of Colonel Despard, Mr. Wickham, in the month of May 1798, wrote a letter to the keeper of the prison, stating that he was directed by the Duke of Portland to desire that the wife of Colonel Despard should have access to him, and might converse with him in the presence of any proper person to be entrusted for that purpose. The Attorney General observed, after having read this letter, that it was in season for him to say, that he had the deposition of a person on oath, stating that Colonel Despard on hearing what had been said in the House of Commons of the hardships of his situation, was surprised at it, and added, that if necessary, he would contradict it himself. The account the Attorney General said he had of the matter was this—Mrs. Despard, in the month of June, wrote a letter to the Duke of Portland, in consequence of which the Duke sent for the jailer of the prison, and gave him directions, importing that there should be shewn to the prisoner every indulgence which the nature of the warrant under which he was committed, and safe custody, would admit. After this Mrs. Despard wrote another letter upon the same subject to the noble Duke, to which no answer was returned, because proper directions upon the subject of it had been already given. Mrs. Despard wrote another letter to Mr. Wickham; he told her she had better write again to the Duke of Portland if she had any farther complaint. She did so. The noble Duke desired her to call at his house, which she did. He heard her complaint himself, and afterwards ordered the Colonel to have every thing consistent with the nature of the warrant, and safe custody: ordered him to be allowed the use of books, and also directed the jailer to attend to the circumstance of his being a man of rank, and to allow him such accommodation as common feeling dictated on that account. After this, Mr. Wickham, by order of the Duke of Portland, desired Mr. Ford to go to the jail, and order every indulgence that was consistent with safety, to be given to all the prisoners. Nor was any time whatever in the whole recess lost to this subject, except one week, in which Mr. Wickham went to Tunbridge. Some time after this the Duke of Portland ordered Colonel Despard to be removed to the place where he now is. Here he read the description of the cells (for so he said they were called) in which the prisoners were confined, by which he maintained it was clear there was no pretence for saying they were damp or unwholesome. He then read the deposition taken in the prison, by which it appeared, as he had stated already, that Colonel Despard was surprised at what

had been said on his behalf in the House of Commons; and that, if necessary, he was ready to contradict it himself. He read also some parts of a conversation between the person making this deposition and another person, by which he collected that the letter published in the papers was not of the writing of Mrs. Despard. Perhaps she did not see the whole drift of it. It was a well-written letter, and for a certain purpose well adapted; and the female sex would pardon him, if he said it was a little, perhaps, beyond their stile in general. There were artful men in that prison, and some of them had shewn they ill deserved the lenity that was shewn to them; some of them had a great number of *O'Connor's* pamphlets ready for circulation. Some of them, since they were permitted to be together, debated upon the worst of all possible subjects. He would not go into the question whether these things, or the manner in which they were treated, were any arguments for or against the bill; he mentioned them only to shew the honourable gentleman the great impropriety of a hasty adoption of opinion upon things of this kind, and also to do away the impression which, unanswered, the speech of the honourable gentleman would have produced. What he had to add was this—That he hoped and trusted, in future, before any information is given to the House with respect to the treatment of prisoners, every Member of it will feel it a duty incumbent on him not to rely on the reports of newspapers, but to sift the matter to the bottom. To give a rumour the authority of a speech in that House, without being assured of the truth of that rumour, was, what he called inhumanity to the public. He hoped no accusation would be made in that House upon any subject, before the person bringing it, at least, had sifted the matter to the bottom. No person wished less for harsh treatment to prisoners than himself. They should never meet with more rigour than the necessity of the thing required, and that they ought to submit to without a murmur, for it was inseparable from the nature of things, and the rigour which necessity creates, necessity will justify. He must repeat his observation, that the report of a newspaper was no authority for that House to proceed upon: he therefore hoped the House would hear no more of accounts from newspapers; but, if any Member of the House had any complaint to exhibit, he would do it from the information of his own mind, after actual inquiry into the subject.

Mr. COURTENAY said a few words in explanation, in which he said, that while he was with Colonel Despard, Mrs. Despard came to the prison, and the Colonel told him he must go down and speak to her, for that she was not permitted to come up to him. He would examine every matter again, if he was permitted to visit

the place, and if he found he had been in an error in any thing, he should be perfectly ready to acknowledge it.

Mr. WILBERFORCE began by justifying certain parts of his speech in a former debate upon the same subject, to which the honourable gentleman who spoke last had alluded. When he then mentioned that he had visited the prisons, about which such glaring misrepresentations were sent abroad, he did not mean to say that he had visited them since the prisoners, whose sufferings are now so much exaggerated, were confined in them; nor was he induced to visit them from any particular grounds or motives of idle curiosity, but that he might obtain general information respecting the plan on which they were built, and the principle upon which their regulations were conducted, hoping that if he had room to approve of them, he might be enabled to extend the benefit of them to other parts of the country. The honourable gentleman has said that he had seen with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears, the ill state of the prisons and the cruel hardships suffered by the prisoners; but those who were well read in human nature must often have observed that those who labour under the influence of any strong prejudice frequently deceive themselves, and imagine that they hear and see what persons free from such prejudice would never think of. Indeed, he must think the honourable gentleman as incapable of conviction, since he persevered in his former assertions without adducing any one single argument or fact in corroboration of what he had advanced. The honourable gentleman also denies that he had thrown out any reflection upon Lord Kenyon. That learned Lord was well known to be extremely jealous of his character, and unless he had good grounds for using the language he before referred to, that learned Lord would not have thanked the keeper of those prisons in terms of such praise for the propriety of his conduct—a conduct which, he said, called for a general tribute of gratitude: to suppose, therefore, that the learned Lord would have bestowed such marked approbation where, it was contended, no such approbation was deserved, was doubtless throwing something like a reflection upon the learned Lord's judgement and sincerity. He was likewise told by the honourable gentleman that on this subject he had displayed much religious facetiousness mixed with Christian rancour; these were epithets which were rarely given to the substantives here made use of, at least from his vocabulary he was led to think so; for Christian rancour was surely ill applied, and as to religious facetiousness, he was ready to agree that a religious man might at times be facetious, but it was equally true that a man might be very irreligious and very dull. However, such a man

might take a hint from the advice of Pope, and endeavour to enliven his dullness by the admixture of a few religious ingredients. But a word on the question now before the House. It is said that we ought not to take away that guard to which we owe the security of our rights, of our liberties, and of our happiness; surely not, upon slight and capricious grounds. When, however, it is obvious that we have enemies both without and within, enemies of formidable strength, and of formidable malice: when we see Members of that House, he would not say, who aided, but who appear at least to become friendly to persons of such a stamp and character, then most undoubtedly it became the wisdom and the vigilance of that House to take every measure that could keep us on our guard, and not to relax in any of our exertions to counteract and baffle the wicked designs and machinations of such enemies: we should not, as has been well said, hesitate to sacrifice a part of that, the whole of which we may secure and hereafter enjoy by means of that seasonable sacrifice. The honourable gentleman was also pleased to speak much of his own and of his (Mr. Wilberforce's) humanity; for his part, he might fairly say, that he never came forward in support of any measure, with nothing but the word humanity in his mouth,—nor did he endeavour to gain his point upon false grounds: he, on the contrary, brought forward strong facts, to which he added the plea of humanity. The persons whose cause is now so pathetically pleaded might heretofore have been objects of humane compassion. But where was the honourable gentleman's humanity and friendship for them before they were accused of high treason? Where was the honourable gentleman's curious anxiety to visit the prisons and pry into their regulations before the State Prisoners were confined in them? Has he examined into the treatment of vagrants with equal solicitude? He did not, however, urge these observations with a view to blame the honourable gentleman's humanity and sympathies; he merely urged them to shew that his humanity and sympathy on the present occasion should not have hurried him to bring grave accusations against respectable characters without having examined into the grounds upon which they stood, and without any other apparent proof than the influence of strong prejudice.

Mr. NATHANIEL JEFFERYS said, when the suspension of the Habeas Corpus was moved last year, he had given it his support, with many gentlemen on the same side of the House, from an impression on their minds of the danger threatening the country from treason, an apprehension strongly enforced by the assurances of Ministers that such danger existed. Many gentlemen who then supported the measure now opposed its continuation by saying the

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same inducement no longer existed. Mr. Jefferys agreed with them, that the same inducement no longer did exist—the inducement last year was an apprehension of treason; the inducement now was the experience of the existence of treason, supported by strong facts at Maidstone and elsewhere. Mr. Jefferys said, he represented a very populous manufacturing city, and believed he was speaking the sentiments of ninety-nine out of a hundred, of a very large body of people, by giving his support to the bill now before the House.

With respect to the prison alluded to, Mr. Jefferys said, not having seen it, he could give no opinion, but he thought it his duty to state, that, during the recess, in an extensive journey, he had, from general motives of information, visited the prisons of many large towns through which he passed, and was astonished at the accommodation, tenderness, and humanity, with which the prisoners were treated; one in particular he begged leave to mention to the honour of the county, the prison at Lancaster Castle, where the prisoners were maintained with an attention to humanity and tenderness in a degree more resembling the situation of persons rewarded for good deeds than suffering punishment for crimes.

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT contended, that every assertion he had made was grounded upon facts—nor could he see much delicacy in the manner of an honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce), who thought proper to throw out insinuations respecting the motives which guided his conduct, and that of his honourable friend's. He would now proceed as he had proceeded before, and adduce new facts in proof of his former assertions; in order to do so, however, he must beg the indulgence of the House would permit him to read several papers which had lately been addressed to him. The honourable Baronet then read several papers (we believe sent him by the prisoners from Manchester), the general purport of which was to describe the hardships which they have suffered in the prison at Cold-bath Fields; among which they enumerated their being confined in solitary cells, measuring only eight feet by six, where they could not obtain any thing like a bed without paying a shilling for it; where they were left without fire or candle, exposed to cold weather, in a narrow space where the wet continued to flow down the walls, a situation in which they were compelled to linger for seven months; that far different treatment had been promised them by the Privy Council; and though they had repeatedly written to Mr. Floud, the Magistrate, entreating him to see that promise realised, they could obtain no other redress than that Mr. Floud would see them if they wished to speak with him on public affairs;

but that as to their private situation, it was not in his power to make any alteration in it. The honourable Baronet could not see that the charge of any particular species of guilt could afford any justification for such harsh and cruel treatment. As to the letter read by an honourable gentleman on a former night, respecting the regulations of the prisons, and the comforts enjoyed by the prisoners, to his mind it appeared exceedingly exaggerated; that letter represented the table of the prisoners to be as sumptuous as that of the gentleman who wrote it; and as he was a churchman, it might be well supposed, as the honourable gentleman had before observed, that the table of the clergy is generally well provided. The letter, in short, represented these places of confinement rather as wearing the appearance of an hospital than of a prison; but was not this, if true, a luxury that ill suited a place of correction, where legal chastisement should be inflicted, not where luxuries should be enjoyed? But much he wished that none but legal correction had been resorted to. If, after a due investigation of the matter, he should find that the arguments he had advanced on the subject of the ill treatment of the prisoners were not grounded on fact, he not only would be ready, as an honourable gentleman had advised him, to make an *amende honorable* to the House for the uncalled-for trouble he had given them, but he should also enjoy the happiness of having his feelings relieved from the idea that such foul atrocities had been practised in a country he was taught to look upon as free and humane,—in England,—in the country that gave him birth; if that investigation was not resisted by the House, it was his wish that proper evidence should be called to the bar, in order to have the whole matter cleared up to the general satisfaction of the country, and as such was his wish, he would not now detain the House by any farther observations.

Mr. WILBERFORCE explained the nature of the letters which he had read, the contents of which he believed to be true, because he knew the gentleman who wrote them to be a man of strict veracity.

Mr. BURDON said, that when he had spoken before upon the question now before the House, his observations were summary, and his statements rather short; but these statements were not merely the offspring of a sickly brain: he had taken the trouble fully to investigate the truth of them; and from what he had to say, the House would see whether the treatment experienced by the prisoners in question deserved the very strong denomination of atrocities, which the honourable Baronet has thought proper to give it. He had seen the letter from Mrs. Despard, which appeared in one

of the newspapers; and as soon as he saw it, he felt it his duty to inquire minutely into the causes of her complaints. With that view he went and had a long conversation with Colonel Despard, the result of which, he trusted, would save the honourable Baronet the trouble of looking for that information which he seemed so anxious to obtain. In the interview which he had with Colonel Despard, in the presence of the governor of the prison, the Colonel informed him, that he was as well, in every circumstance, as the nature of a prison would admit. Indeed he was determined to make no complaint, as he enjoyed all the comforts which were recommended by the Secretary of State, and he did not expect more. It was true, that in the month of September he had a chilblain on his heel; but so little did he think of it, that he would not employ the surgeon of the prison to relieve it. He was, he said, an old soldier, and placed little confidence in the professors of medicine; he would therefore doctor his heel himself. As soon as his complaints were known, he was immediately removed to a room where he had fire, candles, &c. and every accommodation he could fairly expect. He had frequent interviews with his wife, with whom he was permitted to converse for almost any length of time. He had not any knowledge of the letter written by her complaining of his ill treatment, or if he had, he would have disapproved of it. Now as to the dampness of the cells, he (Mr. Burdon) could safely aver, that it was a most unfounded assertion. He had examined them himself; they were raised considerably above the ground, and not exposed to wet of any kind. The walls were moreover thick, and well white-washed. The beds were also said to be but two feet wide, and to be exposed to the damp walls. This assertion was as groundless as the former; they neither touched the walls, nor were they exposed to any inclemency of the weather. What then could be the effect of agitating a question like the present, but to traduce the fair character of respectable men, and particularly of the Magistrates, whose conduct should not be lightly arraigned, but on the contrary, should meet with our countenance and support? Did it not go to injure the credit and character of that eminently humane man, who laboured so long and so strenuously in meliorating the state of prisons throughout the country? If these charges could be listened to, would they not tarnish the well-earned glory of that celebrated man? As to the propriety of continuing the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, he was sure there could rest no doubt in any candid and unbiassed mind: the ground of that propriety might, indeed, be changed—but the change only tended to render it

more obvious. It should therefore now, as it had before, have his warmest support.

Mr. CANNING said, he had but little to say, as what was already observed by his honourable friends abundantly refuted every semblance of argument that had been urged on the other side. He therefore only rose to ask, where was the ground for the inquiry which the honourable Baronet was so anxious should be instituted? The House was not in the habit of granting inquiries without some adequate motive to justify them. It should fairly appear that all was not right before any inquiry should be acceded to. But here every statement that was brought forward has been contradicted, nor has any new evidence been adduced, to confirm the assertions: not the least accession of argument or proof has this night been advanced in support of statements that have already been shewn to be groundless. The House therefore should institute no new inquiry on the subject, but leave the scouted and shamed task to the gentlemen who stirred the question, and the country will see what they can do with it. The honourable Baronet had said, that whatever is brought forward by the Ministerial side of the House never fails to make an impression, because it has the countenance of Ministers; while, whatever he on the opposite side attempts to enforce makes no impression at all. But upon whom does the honourable Baronet expect to make an impression, with all the confidence he may repose upon his talents? Surely not upon the House; no, not even upon the mind of the greatest idiot. In the House, according to the honourable Baronet, nothing is carried by the good sense of its Members, but merely by the sway of the Minister, without any attempt to justify the proposed measure. From this observation, this specimen of impartiality, the House may learn what it might expect should the tide of popular favour begin to run another way, and not in the constitutional channel in which it has long, and in which he trusted would long continue to flow. After what had been observed by an honourable Member (Mr. Burdon) on the case of Colonel Despard, it were idle to offer a word more on the subject; but had it been permitted to pass by uncontradicted, the gentlemen who started it could return to their assertion, as flushed with victory as its having been passed by unnoticed. But what now is the case? An illiterate woman, who cannot even spell, writes a letter, an able letter let it be supposed, pathetically describing the hardships and cruelties sustained by her husband: it also comes out, that this letter was written, not by Madame Despard, but by a friend. He would not say that it was written by the honourable gentleman (Mr.

Courtenay), for he had seen some of his writings, and he might assure the honourable gentleman, that the letter in question was as far superior to his literary productions, as it was above the former epistolary specimens of Mrs. Despard. The whole of the contents of that letter has now been completely contradicted; and those who so confidently brought it forward, were so completely confuted, brought to shame and ridicule, that he was sure they would not venture to restate it again. He had, however, still to hope, from the prudent caution of the honourable gentleman, that whatever his private creed might be, he would not expose it to the examination of his honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce); on such subjects it were better to remain silent here; and he would advise the honourable gentleman to keep his humanity for Smith and Binns, his religion for Newgate, and his jokes for the hackney coachmen.

The House was then about to resolve itself into a Committee on the bill, when, on the motion that the Speaker do leave the chair,

Mr. COURTENAY rose again, and contended, that not one fact adduced by him had been disproved; it evidently appeared, that the prisoners had been confined in cells such as had been described, and that they were immured in a prison which was only intended for convicted felons, and not for State Prisoners.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL said, that when he first heard the proposition, that two negatives made an affirmative, his mind was greatly puzzled indeed; but he was as much astonished when he heard the honourable gentleman assert, that though every body denied what he advanced, still nobody contradicted it; but he must only suppose that the honourable gentleman wished to say something that might enable him to join in the laugh at himself.

Mr. COURTENAY and Mr. WILBERFORCE severally explained; after which the House went into the Committee on the bill, in which it was agreed that the bill should remain in force till the 21st of May, 1799. The report was then ordered to be received to-morrow.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee on the bill for exempting persons serving in volunteer corps from being balloted into the supplementary militia. A short conversation arose in the Committee between Mr. Yorke, Mr. Burdon, and Mr. Secretary Dundas. Mr. Yorke was fearful that several persons might take improper means in order to obtain this exemption, which would tend much to injure the militia service.

Mr. BURDON highly commended the activity of Mr. Dundas in putting the country in such an excellent state of defence; but,

in his opinion, our attention to the defensive force of the country should not prevent us from training up an offensive force which might as effectually contribute to our defensive strength.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that he had provided some new clauses that would do away all the apprehensions of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Yorke): he was likewise happy to hear the observation thrown out by another honourable Member (Mr. Burdon) respecting the propriety of providing an offensive force; and it was his sincere wish that gentlemen would turn that observation seriously in their minds, as it might be proper, hereafter, to come to some resolution upon it. He would now only remark upon one advantage that would evidently arise out of it. The French, from their plans of aggrandizement, had got possession of an immense tract of coast, which must necessarily be very vulnerable in many points: with an offensive force of 15 or 20,000 men, we might be enabled so to harass and annoy them, that to counteract this force they would be under the necessity of keeping no less than 100,000 men to protect their coast. Thus an offensive force would essentially increase our defensive strength and internal security—but this subject would soon, he hoped, be more fully and materially considered.

The new clauses were then read and agreed to; the report was received and ordered to be printed, and to be taken into farther consideration to-morrow.

Thursday, December 27.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he took the present opportunity of apprising the House, that very early after the ensuing recess of Parliament, it was his intention to move for leave to bring in a bill to repeal two acts passed in the session before the last, which postponed the shooting of partridges from the 1st to the 14th day of September; and also for an act to amend the act of the second of his present Majesty, by extending the time of killing partridges from the 1st to the 12th of February.

Mr. TIERNEY rose and spoke to the following purport:—I am extremely sorry, Sir, to be under the necessity of calling the attention of the House to what I deem to be a breach of the privileges of this House. I believe, Sir, there is no gentleman in this House who would be less desirous than myself to curtail or abridge the liberty which the House has allowed to the printers and editors of newspapers, of gratifying the curiosity of the public, by publishing the debates of the House, in not enforcing an order of the House

against it. I believe, Sir, there is not any one Member who is more willing and desirous to make a fair and liberal allowance than I am for those errors and inaccuracies to which, in the very nature of the thing, publications made in so great a hurry as to appear the next morning, must of course be incident. I am the more ready to do this, Sir, because it is my real opinion that the editors and conductors of the papers in general, whatever their party connections or attachments may be, use their utmost efforts, for the sake of the credit and character of their respective publications, to give the substance of the speeches of every Member, to whatever side of the House he may attach himself, with every possible degree of fairness, accuracy, and impartiality. I speak this, Sir, not only from my own observation, but from similar remarks of others, with whom I have conversed on the subject, as to the general tenor and conduct of those hasty productions. No man, therefore, would be more desirous to overlook any inaccuracy, error, or even misstatement, which appeared to me to arise from the hurry in which the debates must be written by those who report them, or from any defect in the hearing of the words, from the various interruptions, from distance, and other circumstances, to which the words of every gentlemen who speak in this House are subject. But, Sir, I conceive it to be a very different case, where a statement is made in any newspaper, purporting to be a debate or conversation of two Members of this House, published four days after the debate to which it alludes actually took place, and not only mistating and misrepresenting the debate, but containing several political reflections and animadversions on it, interspersed throughout the whole. In such a case, Sir, I hold it to be a duty I owe not only to myself, but to every individual Member of the House, to bring the matter before the House, and leave it to their determination how far the dignity of the House is attacked and insulted by such calm and deliberate misrepresentations. I feel it, Sir, necessary to request the attention and recollection of the House to a subject which has already been before them, and which has given rise to the matter of which I now complain. I dare say it is in the memory of every gentleman then present, that, in consequence of a statement I made a few evenings ago, by way of illustration, I mentioned that a very distinguished person having, at a period of a triple assessment, thought it neither a sin nor a shame to evade the payment of his taxes; that he was in possession of a very handsome pension; but having in view a place of far greater importance, he had resigned his pension, taken advantage of the interval, and made a return of neither one or the other. In the course of that debate, Sir, I was called upon by

several gentlemen to name the person I alluded to; but for reasons which I then thought of sufficient weight, I declined doing so. It is but doing justice to the right honourable gentleman opposite to me to declare, that during the whole of the conversation which took place on that subject, he acted with the utmost degree of candour and liberality; he unequivocally allowed that he believed I had mentioned the circumstance merely by way of illustration; and on finding from the whispers that went round the House, as well as from other circumstances, which did not at first strike him, that the allusion was made to a certain noble person, he had fairly and candidly declared, that if I meant that nobleman, I was altogether misinformed, for that he had not only given in his full quota of assessment, but had actually contributed double that sum by way of voluntary contribution; so that, in fact, he paid a fifth; I must own, Sir, I was struck with this open and unreserved avowal of the right honourable gentleman, and did not hesitate to say, that, supposing the facts to be as he had then stated them, I must undoubtedly be wrong; and thus, Sir, I supposed the matter would have ended. However, Sir, in a paper called *The Times*, published on Wednesday the 26th of December, four days after the debate alluded to really took place, and which I now hold in my hand, there is a publication of debate, under the express head of "A conversation between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Tierney," containing not only the supposed substance of what passed in that debate, but also several political comments, reflections, and animadversions, on the subject-matter thereof.

As to political comments or animadversions applied to myself, I have been so much used to them of late, that I assure you, Sir, I should be so far from wishing to trouble the House, that I have ever made a determination of treating them with that marked indifference which they generally merit. But, Sir, in addition to these, the paper or report which I allude to, and which fills four columns of *The Times*, is replete with the most glaring and the grossest falsehoods and misrepresentations, which I conceive to convey a marked disrespect for the honour and dignity of this House, and which I hope the House will, in justice to themselves, deem worthy their most serious notice. I think it also necessary to observe, Sir, that from the particular situation of the paper called *The Times*, it becomes still more deserving the attention and consideration of the House. It is very well known, Sir, that the property of that paper is so valuable a one, from the great number of advertisements, the high price paid for them, and other material circumstances attached to it, that the owners of it would not suffer four columns of it to be

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filled with any speech or speeches whatever, out of the regular course of reporting a debate, without being paid for it very handsomely indeed. and this, Sir, for a very substantial reason, that it would deprive them of so much space, which they can always fill up to the best advantage. From this circumstance, Sir, there is very good reason to infer that this misrepresentation of which I complain, under the title of a conversation between the right honourable gentleman and myself, has been sent to *The Times*, and the insertion paid for by some person or persons; who, in misrepresenting and mistating what has passed, have shewn the greatest want of respect for this House; and it would be a very desirable circumstance to discover, if possible, who they are. I beg leave once more, Sir, to assure the House that I am not actuated by any personal motive respecting myself. I look upon it, that such misrepresentations equally affect every other Member in their consequences, as they do me; and I shall not therefore, at present, take up any more of the time of the House than to put it in the power of the House to take such serious notice of it as may seem proper, by moving, "that the insertion of such misrepresentations and misstatements as are contained in the paper of *The Times*, now in my hand, is a breach of the privilege of this House."

Mr. SPEAKER said, if the honourable Member wished the complaint to be taken up by the House, it was necessary that he should state what were the offensive parts in the paper he alluded to.

Mr. TIERNEY said, what he complained of was, that *The Times* had not given a fair representation of what passed in the debate alluded to.

Mr. SPEAKER remarked, that by a standing order of that House no editor of a newspaper was at liberty to give any account at all of the proceedings of that House. Several complaints of this sort had, upon former occasions, been laid before the House in different forms; but it was necessary that the complaint should be expressly stated before any order of that House could be made in consequence.

Mr. TIERNEY said, his only ground of complaint was, that the editor of *The Times* did not state his share in the debate of Saturday evening in the manner it had been taken by him; and the aggravation of this complaint was, that this misrepresentation did not arise from the hurry of reporting after the House broke up, but after a lapse of four days, which circumstance carried upon the face of it a design of wilful misrepresentation, especially as the report was intermixed with the editor's political animadversions.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the foundation of his complaint, if brought before the House, must be a violation of one of its standing orders, which forbade the publication of its proceedings. In the year 1771 something similar had occurred; and then, the complaint brought forward was twofold; the first, for publishing an account of the debate, and the second for misrepresenting the debate.

Mr. TIERNEY replied, that he wished a distinction to be drawn by the House betwixt a newspaper report, and the misrepresentation of a debate. The present subject no more concerned him than any other Member. The right honourable gentleman's speech (Mr. Pitt's) on Saturday evening, had also been misrepresented in *The Times* of yesterday; he could wish to hear his sentiments on the subject. He thought he had a right rather to expect assistance from honourable Members, than to meet with any check in bringing the subject forward. He again declared, that if the noble Lord (Auckland) was the person he had alluded to in his speech, he had not the smallest shame to retract what he had stated. What he complained of was, that the editor of *The Times*, four days after the debate had taken place, under the pretence of giving an account of that debate, had intermixed political matter.

Mr. SPEAKER laid down the rule, that before the House could proceed upon this complaint, its nature and ground must be stated; and from what the honourable Member had mentioned, he was afraid there would be some embarrassment betwixt the standing order of the House, and the specific ground on which he made his complaint; for the honourable gentleman did not complain of the publication of the debate, but of misrepresentation; but if the House should confine itself to receiving this complaint, it would appear as if it had lost sight of its own general standing order. His opinion was, that it would be right first to complain of the printer of *The Times* for having published the debate, and then, as an aggravation, to complain of the misrepresentation of that debate; but it would be impossible for the House to take up the complaint on the latter ground only, and not to include the publication as well as the misrepresentation.

Mr. TIERNEY then said, "I do complain of the publication, and of the misrepresentation."

Upon the suggestion of the Speaker, the motion (which was made and seconded) ran thus:

"Complaint being made to the House, of the printed newspaper, entitled, '*The Times, Wednesday, Dec. 26, 1798*,'—*London*:—Printed at the Printing Office, in *Printing-House Square*,

Blackfriars, by C. Bell (*Brunswick Street*), and published by J. Bonfor (*Salisbury Square*), as containing an account of the Debates, and misrepresenting the Speeches of some of the Members of this House, in contempt of the orders, and in breach of the privilege, of this House :”

“ The said paper was delivered in, and one of the paragraphs complained of was read.”

Mr. Chancellor PITT said :—I do not rise, Sir, with any intention to oppose the motion of the honourable gentleman, nor in any manner to object to the paper alluded to being delivered in at the table and read to the House. Having never either seen or read the paper now alluded to, it is impossible for me to have any farther knowledge of its contents more than what I have been able to collect from the statement just made by the honourable gentleman; but as from that statement it appears to relate, in a particular manner, to what passed a few evenings ago, upon what I then thought, and still do think, a very important subject, and highly essential to the character of the noble personage mentioned in it to be cleared up as satisfactorily as possible, I beg to say a few words on it now. The honourable gentleman has very fairly and candidly stated what then fell from me on that subject so far as he has mentioned it on the present occasion. And I have no doubt now, no more than I had on the preceding evening, when the subject was before the House, that what the honourable gentleman then stated was intended by him merely in illustration. But, Sir, as the matter has once more been brought before the House, I would wish it now to be clearly understood. I believe it is in the recollection of every gentleman, that when the statement was first mentioned, I was far from supposing that the honourable gentleman really meant to allude to any particular person, and therefore contented myself with barely saying, that if the case was a real one, it was deserving the most serious attention, and desiring the honourable gentleman to name the person. When, however, from the whispers that were passing round the House, I perceived that the allusion was made to a noble personage nearly connected with the Government of the country, and that the insinuation or rather charge against him was, that he had endeavoured to elude the force of an act of Parliament by doing that which, in any man, much more one of his exalted and distinguished situation in life, was a scandalous evasion of the law of the land, I could not for a moment longer sit silent; and therefore did not hesitate to inform the honourable gentleman, that from the whole of what had been said, he had, I could clearly perceive, been very grossly misinformed. If he meant to say, that the noble

person alluded to had neither given a statement of the pension he had resigned, or of the important office he was about to accept, nothing could be farther from the real fact. I then assured the honourable gentleman, that so far from that being the case, the distinguished person alluded to had acted in a manner which reflected the highest honour on his patriotism ; that he had received no abatements whatever but those which the law allowed to every other person, which was one-tenth ; that with the greatest and most praiseworthy generosity, he had added another tenth, by way of voluntary contribution ; so that, instead of any evasion, he had actually contributed a fifth of his property, which was double the sum which the law really demanded of him. I have been thus particular, Sir, in repeating what I said the preceding evening, because I deem it of the highest importance that vague and unfounded reports and insinuations, so strongly and intimately affecting persons nearly connected with the existing Government of the country, should be as speedily and effectually as possible cleared up and rooted out of the public mind, on which they might produce the most mischievous and unhappy consequences. I have repeatedly, Sir, declared, that I believe the statement made by the honourable gentleman to be only in illustration. I have, from taking the whole together, of the resigning the pension, and the acceptance of a place of high importance, pointed out the noble person to whom I supposed the honourable gentleman meant to allude ; but though the honourable gentleman has confessed that according to my statements he was in the wrong, yet, Sir, he has not made any answer to the question, whether the noble personage to whom I alluded, and in his own opinion freed from the charge, was the same person he meant. This, Sir, is leaving it still in doubt, whether some other person may not be suspected of having done that which I have no doubt every person nearly connected with the present Government would indignantly spurn at ; and I hope the honourable gentleman will have candour enough, on the present occasion, so far to clear up the point as to give an explicit answer to that question. The honourable gentleman is not desired to name any person whatever, if that should not be the case. And now, Sir, having said thus much on this particular subject, I beg leave to say a few words on the point immediately under the consideration of the House ; and I am clearly of opinion with you, Sir, that if the House take up this business at all, it will be necessary in the first place to advert to the breach of the standing order of the House, which forbids any publication of what passes there by any person whatever. It will be for the House to consider how far they will waive the consideration of the repeated breaches

which have been made, and are continually making, with regard to this order. I should be very sorry, Sir, to be obliged to interpose the authority of the House in restricting what has long been permitted, as a medium of communication between this House and the Public. But, Sir, the daily occasions which are given by the public prints for complaints from every quarter of the House of misrepresenting and mistating what passes in it, seems to require the most attentive consideration of this House to devise some means of checking or preventing this growing abuse. As to the paper in question, Sir, I have no objection to its being handed in at the table, and read to the House.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that he took this opportunity again to repeat what he had said on a former occasion. When the matter was first stated, he was speaking in a way which some accused as levity, a proof that he was not in a temper to make grave and serious accusations, and what he had said was merely an illustration of the disposition of people to avoid taxes, when so much was said of what was odiously called evading the payment of taxes. He had stated that there were many people, who would not be guilty of what they considered a gross act of dishonesty, that would think themselves justified in availing themselves of the strict letter of the law to avoid the payment of taxes, and the instance he alluded to, he had stated as an ingenious device in that way. He never meant to make any grave and weighty charge against any person. There must be some gentlemen who were disposed to take mortal offence at every thing he said, and to represent what in another would be considered as a trifling matter, as a very serious crime in him. This, however, would put him more upon his guard in future. The allusion was meant only to illustrate what was always held to be a common practice. In looking into an author of note, he had found the same idea stated, though with much more elegance and force than he could pretend to give it. The book he alluded to was a letter from Mr. Eden to Lord Carlisle. Having stated the income of the country to be one hundred millions, and that the tenth of that income would produce no more than $7\frac{1}{2}$, he illustrates the practice of avoiding taxes by saying, "We know that opulent persons can shut out the rays of the sun to avoid the window tax. (This was supposed to allude to a noble person whom he should not name, as he meant to beware of anecdotes.) We know that horses are obliged to drag twenty miles extra, to avoid the post duty; that disinterested enthusiasm was not of rampant growth; it was a sensible plant which shrunk from the touch of the tax gatherer." Such was the idea which he had stated upon these authorities, and it was in illus-

tration of it that he had made the allusion which had given so much offence. He had been called upon at first with much warmth to name the person alluded to. The right honourable gentleman, on the contrary, with the most perfect temper, civility, and good manners, had taken notice of it, in so far as he conceived it to apply to a certain noble person; and he was ready at all times, if betrayed into an error, candidly to acknowledge, and when he had been mistaken, he thought there could be no shame whatever in admitting it. The right honourable gentleman certainly was right; my Lord Auckland was the person alluded to. He was not to be intimidated, however, to answer questions put to him in a petulant, offensive manner; but when gentlemen acted with politeness and good manners, he was always ready in candour to give every satisfaction in his power. The mistake had originated in a misstatement of the fortune of the noble Lord in question. The right honourable gentleman, however, had stated from his personal knowledge, that the account was utterly unfounded, and he knew no better authority when the right honourable gentleman pledged himself to a fact in such a manner. He now, therefore, withdrew his sanction from a statement which had come to him as a rumour. He could not do more than this. He never had any intention to hurt the feelings of any person; he never meant to adduce the fact as a grave and serious charge, and he felt no shame in retracting what he had said; and if he had occasioned any harm to the noble Lord he was sorry for it.

Mr. BANKES said, he was sorry he was not in the House when the honourable gentleman first began. From what he heard, however, of the honourable gentleman's explanation, he must take the liberty to say, that when the conversation first took place, he had stated that the story had reached him not from rumour, but from a person of credibility on whom he could rely. Now he had stated the person to whom he had alluded like a man of honour. When that allusion was first made, it was in a way somewhat different, in the impression it made on the House, from the turn which the honourable gentleman now gave it. He had stated that the noble Lord in question, at the moment of giving an account of his income under the Assessed-Tax Bill, had, as not being in receipt of his pension which he had resigned, and not knowing the amount of the profits of his office, reduced his income to 300*l.* a year. This too he stated not on rumour, but coming from a person on whose accuracy he relied.

Mr. TIERNEY here interrupted Mr. Bankes, and said, there was no inconsistency between what he said formerly and what he

said now. He had said, that he had it from a person on whose accuracy he thought he could rely ; but on inquiry, he found that this person had it from rumour, from A, B, and C, consequently he was justified in saying he had received it only from rumour.

Mr. BANKES said, he would in a few words justify what he had stated. If a gentleman stated in the House that he had a fact from a creditable person, it certainly was intended to have more weight than if he gave it merely as vague rumour. It turned out now, that the honourable gentleman's person of accuracy had no accuracy, and that the person he thought was to be relied on, could not be relied on at all. Certainly in matters tending to affect the character, and to wound the feelings, of others, gentlemen should be certain of the accuracy on which their statements were founded.

Mr. TIERNEY wondered that gentlemen should think that it was possible for him to see at once what was a rumour and what was not. He had now asked the person from whom he had received the story, how he had obtained it, and he found it was not from accurate information, but from rumour. Now, therefore, he was aware, that what he had conceived to be founded on accurate knowledge, was nothing more than vague rumour.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL said, that he had at one period of his life lived in some terms of intimacy with the honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney), and that intimacy still left a considerable impression on his mind. He could not help thinking still, however, that what the honourable gentleman had formerly said bore a construction different from what he had now given it, and was calculated to produce different impressions on the House. What he had said of a noble person implied a charge of a very serious nature, and begged the honourable gentleman to consider how dangerous it was to state——

Mr. TIERNEY here stated, that he should be happy to renew his acquaintance with the learned gentleman, but he did not wish to hear sermons from him—[Here was a cry of "Order!"]

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL proceeded. He said, he had no intention of giving the honourable gentleman offence ; he merely meant, that what the honourable gentleman had advanced amounted to a very serious charge. It was not the case of a person endeavouring to avoid payment of a tax, by adhering strictly to the letter of the law ; but it was, if truly stated, a palpable fraud. When such a statement, implying such a charge, was advanced, it was very natural that those who were acquainted with persons to

whom the allusion could in any shape be construed to apply, should be anxious to justify them from the imputation.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he never had stated it as at all implying such a fraud, nor was it ever meant as a grave accusation. If the learned gentleman had applied to the right honourable gentleman next him, his more accurate recollection, together with his candour, would have informed him that no such thing had been said.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL said, that he had merely stated that, what the honourable gentleman had alluded to as having been done by a noble person would have amounted to a fraud, and that the warmth of those who wished to justify their friends from the imputation was quite natural.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the House would perceive that this conversation was irregular. On the present occasion they would judge how far he had done right in acquiescing in it; but certainly it had now been carried far enough.

On the motion being put, that the paper be given in and read,

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, he was not sure whether the House would recollect, that in what he had said in his first speech, the honourable gentleman had alluded to the insertion of the report complained of being paid for by certain persons. He had some reason to believe that this insinuation was intended to allude to him (Mr. Wilberforce); if so, he wished the honourable gentleman to say so candidly, that he might have an opportunity to say a few words to exculpate himself from the charge, and if it was proposed to read the paper, to urge reasons against it.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, he rose to speak immediately to the question before the House. He thought that the honourable gentleman must now have attained the object he had in view in bringing in this complaint. It was certainly true that misrepresentation was an aggravation of the breach of privilege in printing the proceedings of the House at all; but the breach of privilege was that which the House had to consider. It was not the accuracy or inaccuracy of the reports, but the violation of the order of the House, that was to be taken into view; though certainly it was not to overlook personal feelings, and every man must be anxious not to be misrepresented; the privilege of the House was the great consideration on which they must act. If the honourable gentleman was not content with stating the complaint, for the purpose of correcting an error, which probably would be corrected by what had now passed in the very same paper to-morrow, the complaint must go a great deal farther than the honourable gentleman might intend.

Every other person who had published the proceedings alluded to, must likewise be called up. He thought, therefore, that it would be better at present to withdraw the motion. If the object in view was the protection of the privileges of the House, this would be attained, as what had already taken place would shew that the House was determined to go to the rigour of its privileges, if they were abused. If it was persisted in, no distinction could be made; and those who had been equally guilty of a breach of the privileges of this House, as the printer in question, would be equally liable to its animadversion.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that this case differed very widely from every other. The account was inserted several days after the conversation had taken place, and professed to correct other statements. As to the motion, he thought it belonged to the House to dispose of it. He should not withdraw it. He did feel it as a malevolent attempt to excite animosities between individuals, and he was convinced that its insertion had been paid for by some persons in this view.

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR said, that since this subject was brought before the House, they had no option under their order with respect to the vote they were to give, and he hoped it would have the effect to correct a practice which he had even thought before he was in Parliament, and since he had been in it, both while he sat on the other side of the House, and on this, an intolerable abuse, materially affecting not only the dignity of the House, but likewise the interests of the country. These disadvantages, he said, resulted from it, independent of the misrepresentations so justly complained of. He hoped therefore that this complaint would operate as a check, and remove any false impressions as to the reasons which had induced the House to permit the practice. He assented to the motion, not on account of the injustice which the honourable gentleman had suffered, though he should not be less sensible of the injustice done to him than to any other Member, but on the general ground, that a particular case of injustice was vastly subordinate to the great object of protecting the privileges of the House, which were violated, by the publication of their proceedings at all. However the House had connived, and how long they might continue to connive, at the practice, he should be sorry that the question should go off without the House giving an opinion upon the important question of these privileges. He had stated his opinion on the general point. As to the misrepresentations complained of, it was impossible to expect that daily subject of complaint would not occur when the situation of persons concerned in the employment, and the influence

of every kind to which they were subject, was considered. This practice had grown into a great evil, and it was but of recent origin; nor did he think that Parliament, in former times, had been so ignorant of what was proper to be done with regard to the regulation of their privileges, and that it was only in modern times that we had discovered what was the proper course to follow.

Mr. MARTIN said, he wished the matter to be now decided. There was no occasion for farther warning, after what had been said a few days ago by an honourable gentleman. He had long observed the misrepresentations which were given of what passed here; and he thought that those who wrote the report made gentlemen say just what they themselves pleased.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH said, that gentlemen did not seem willing to observe the distinction between this case and others where misrepresentation might exist. However the orders of the House might consider the publication as the chief offence, gentlemen's minds must take into consideration the intention with which a misrepresentation was accompanied. If misrepresentation was an aggravation of the breach of privilege, the intention was an aggravation of that misrepresentation. A report made up in a few hours ought to be distinguished from an account which had been considered for several days; and he left it to gentlemen to judge, whether there was not here an intention to convert reports into a vehicle of attack upon the Members of the House.

Mr. JONES said, he agreed that the publication of all reports was a breach of privilege; and if any representation was to be given, it should be full, fair, official, and legal. He thought that gentlemen in power should turn their attention to this point. As to the particular merits of this question, he was not sufficiently master of them.

Mr. WILBERFORCE wished again to know whether the honourable gentleman who brought this matter forward alluded to him in any part of his speech? He had asked the honourable gentleman before, but to which there was no answer given. Whether that was to be considered as an affirmative or negative, he could not say; but with regard to the question now before the House, he had to observe, that there were other papers in which were misrepresentations of the grossest kind, and that upon this very subject; not only on the general heads of the subject, but also on what he had himself stated with regard to a point about which he confessed he was very anxious—he meant the character of the noble Lord who had been alluded to in the debate, and who had been named to-night. He happened to take in two papers, of which that in question was one, and he

feared there was as little truth or accuracy in the one as in the other, so far as related to the Debates of that House. He stood in a particular situation in regard to the question now before the House. He certainly gave his opinion, in some degree, the other night, upon the very subject now before the House. He certainly declared it to be his opinion, that it became the House, for the credit and the character of individuals in certain respects, but for the great object which the House ought always to have in view, for the character of the House of Commons, and for the safety of the Constitution of this country, it was incumbent on the House to provide some remedy against the great and growing evil, the misrepresentations of the proceedings of Parliament, which had been suffered of late to rise to an height too great to be allowed to continue. Certainly all that had passed since had not contributed to alter his opinion. But although this article now complained of by the honourable gentleman might be liable to censure, yet he must observe, that to take this paper, and this only, as one that ought to be the object of censure, would be a very unfair and curtailed mode of proceeding, and it would appear like injustice if the House did not take other papers as well as this. But with regard to the sort of reflection that had been cast upon him, he could not help observing, that there seemed to be a disposition in some gentlemen to take notice always of the manner in which he spoke his sentiments in that House, and it was rather insinuated, as if he was actuated by some angry motives in what he said. He thought this a little extraordinary to come from some gentlemen who had for a long time been acquainted with him. Perhaps from a natural warmth of temper, he was led sometimes to speak in a manner that was more acrimonious than he might wish; his motives, however, were always the same, and all his conduct was to one point, namely, the good of the Public. However, he must leave this to the sentiments of those who of late, as well as of former years, knew the most of him. Be these things as they might, he should always express his opinions freely; and now that he was upon this subject, he should take the liberty of saying, there was a very common practice in that House, which, for its honour and dignity, he wished to be discontinued. The Members of that House were in the habit of speaking of one another in a fulsome stile of compliment, in a way that might, perhaps, please some bystanders, but which neither aided the debate, nor had the least tincture of sincerity in it; and the very Members themselves, who used that sort of language in the House, treated it every where else as empty sound and trifling nonsense. This was a habit that was no credit to the House, and he, for one, wished to see it set aside, and

the language of sincerity adopted. He wished gentlemen to speak the truth upon these points, as well as others, distinctly as they felt, and not to give way to an unmeaning or shallow style of compliment upon one another. With respect to the question now before the House, he could only say, that he really never wished to put a stop to the fair statement of the proceedings of Parliament. It had long been a desire with him, that they should be accurately given to the public; and he should look back with pleasure on the moment of his life, in which he was aware he had been in any degree instrumental in bringing about that desired object. But he must again repeat, that if any notice was to be taken by the House of the inaccuracy of newspapers, this paper should not be the only one, while there were others, equally faulty, that were taken no notice of whatever upon this head of complaint.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that the honourable gentleman misconceived him very much, if he thought he had any particular enmity against the paper of which he had just complained, quite the contrary; he had no such enmity; but he thought it his duty to state this as an unwarrantable publication, not, as it regarded what he said, but as it regarded what others, much more important in the estimation of the House, said—If the honourable gentleman could shew him any other paper, in which there was the same account as that, of which he was now complaining, in *The Times*, he should think it his duty to bring forward that paper also; but this was the only one he knew of that had this account.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that he did not think there was any other paper that had this account in it; but having looked at two papers, which he took in, and having examined them for the reason he had stated already, he was ready to say, they both contained gross misrepresentation of what passed in that House; and although the account of which the honourable gentleman complained was not so accurate as it ought to be, yet it was not so inaccurate as the first account to which it referred.

Mr. Chancellor PITT thought it would be much better to defer this debate, as it involved a point of great importance—namely, the mode in which the matter should be disposed of; for on the question of the standing order, there could be no difference of opinion; but on the other points many arguments ought to be urged, and when they came forward, no doubt, the House would give to them the attention they should merit; but he thought that could not now be done consistently with the convenience of the House. He would observe, however, in passing, that if any determination was come to upon the paper now proposed, the House owed

it to its justice to adopt the same with regard to others. He thought, that after the long connivance of the House at the publication of its proceedings, and the very gross abuse of that connivance, in a perversion of them, in some respects, in every case in which they were published, it would be inconsistent with the dignity or the justice of the House to make any partial order upon this particular thing. What had already happened might be considered as a fair warning to others. If the particular passages complained of in this paper were to be pointed out, he thought it would be convenient to the House that the subject should be deferred, and for that purpose the regular way would be to adjourn this debate to some future day. But he must say again, that when the House did return to the consideration of the business, they should be prepared to take a general view of the subject, and not to confine itself to any thing that belonged to this particular paper.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he thought he saw a general disposition in the House not to pursue this subject any farther—[Here there was a cry of "No! No! No!"]—He observed, that it was not against the paper of *The Times* that he had any objection, because it was favourable to Ministers in its general policy, but it was to the manner in which the conversation of Saturday night last had been reported that his objection was pointed. He should do the same thing against any other paper if it contained the same account: but from the manner in which this matter had been hitherto treated, he very much questioned whether the House had not better say at once they would not proceed any farther.

The question being put,

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS said, that if this matter was to be considered, he thought that to-morrow would be too early a day; some time ought to be given to consider the whole of the subject, for some other papers might fall into the same predicament. He should therefore move that some future day be appointed for the discussion of this business. It would be well to postpone it now, not for ever, but he thought for a week or a fortnight—[Here there was some dissent]—He proceeded, and said, he did not mean to give the go-by to the matter.

The question was again put.

Mr. W. SMITH observed, that it was indifferent to him whether this was to come on now or not: but there was another paper in which there was the most gross misrepresentation—

The SPEAKER reminded the honourable Member, that he could not engraft any charge upon that which was now before the House.

Mr. W. SMITH acquiesced, and said he should postpone what he had to say upon that subject.

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS said, he still wished this matter to be postponed to a future day, not too near the present; not, indeed, to a day over which the House might adjourn, for that, he knew, would be liable to untoward observations. He therefore moved, That, instead of the word "now," the words "on Monday next" be substituted.

The question was then put upon the original motion for reading the paper immediately, and negatived.

Then the question was put on the amendment of the Master of the Rolls, and it was ordered.

Ordered,

That the farther consideration of the matter of the said complaint be adjourned till *Monday* morning next.

The report of the bill for continuing the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act was brought up, read, and agreed to; and the bill was ordered to be read a third time to-morrow, if engrossed.

The order of the day being moved for the farther consideration of the report of the bill for taxing income,

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY observed, that no person was more unwilling than he was to oppose what appeared to be the general sentiment of the House, and was far from wishing to withhold the supplies necessary for carrying on the war with vigour, for which, indeed, no man was more desirous than himself. With regard to the present bill, however, there were several parts of it which deserved to be well weighed before it was adopted by that House. He had always considered that the prosperity of every free country depended upon three points: these were, the security of life, personal liberty, and property. Wherever these were strictly preserved, the happiness of the people was insured. Now in this country, the security of life was rendered very complete by the wise institutions of Grand and Petty Juries, which were wonderfully calculated for preserving the life of the subject. With respect to personal liberty, it had long been better secured in this than in any other country. It was, indeed, interrupted by the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act; but on that subject he did not mean to speak, as the suspension was only temporary. The next subject was property, and it also had hitherto been well secured in this country; but if this bill passed upon its present principle, he was convinced that its protection would be totally removed. In every government there must be some authority which possesses the power of imposing taxes. In this country that power was invested in Parliament.

This point was settled in the reign of Charles the First, by the resistance of the Great Hampden to the payment of ship-money. Hitherto all the taxes imposed by Parliament had been in a great measure optional; that is to say, they were generally laid upon articles of consumption, which people could either take or forbear to use as they pleased. There were but two instances, that he knew, of taxes of a contrary nature, viz. the tax on salt and the tax on windows. Perhaps it might be objected, that the tax on necessaries of life were not optional: certainly so far as absolute necessity exists they were, but still they were optional as to the quantity consumed. This mode of taxation had been a great protection to property in England, because it was the natural operation of a tax upon any article to diminish its consumption whenever the duty imposed was carried too high. The effect of this often was, that the tax produced less to the revenue than it did when it was more moderate: but it might, perhaps, be said, why limit taxation? Upon a little reflection, he believed it would occur, that the power of limiting taxation must be productive of very beneficial effects: it put out of the power of the Government to apply the money drawn from the people to every purpose they chose, for people would not be very eager in consuming articles, when they recollected that the money raised upon them by taxation was to be applied to purposes which they disapproved. The mode of taxation which was now proposed foregoes that principle, and is founded upon another, according to which the Minister may not only levy one tenth, but one twentieth, and so on, from every man's income, until there shall be nothing left. The assessed taxes had no resemblance to the present measure. Indeed, during the first year, no abatement could be procured in the tax, but in the next it could, and in the mean time servants, carriages, &c. might be dismissed. He did not say that this means of avoiding the tax would be resorted to, but if people thought it would be applied to a bad purpose, they certainly would withhold as much of it as possible. In short, upon every view of the subject, he wished all taxes to be made optional in as great a degree as possible. The bill now under the consideration of the House had undergone considerable alterations in the Committee. It was still, however, liable to very great objections. To the mode of choosing the Commissioners, he objected that the Grand Jury had not a free choice, but that they were chosen from a list formed by the Commissioners of Taxes. To the proposed disclosure of income, two objections arose. The first he should make, was on the part of men whose affairs were not so well as they could wish; the second would, perhaps, be thought ex-

traordinary—it was, that much inconvenience might arise from men being proved to be in too good a situation. Gentlemen would, perhaps, be less surprised when they heard what he had to say upon this subject. Might not much evil arise from children obtaining information of what their fathers possessed, and learning too soon that they were likely to inherit a large fortune? It would also doubtless produce very bad effects upon the economy of families, by the whole of their wealth being exposed to the knowledge of a great number of persons. It, perhaps, would be said, that this bill should be submitted to, because no other efficient mode of raising the supplies could be devised. It was fit, however, that the House should consider, whether some better mode might not be adopted; but the power given by this bill was not the least important consideration attending it. It was not enough to say that this power would not be exercised; it was sufficient that it existed. Every one knew the effect that the existence of such power had upon other countries, where it produced the most slavish habits, and a total depression of public spirit, notwithstanding that it was exercised in the mildest manner possible, or, perhaps, not encouraged at all. There was another very material circumstance: by this act the Government will be let into the secret of every man's income and property in the country. This was a secret it would be very improper for Government to know, for it would create a great temptation to take more from the people, and he did not know that that temptation would be resisted. The oath taken by the Commissioners was not sufficient for securing secrecy.

Mr. Chancellor PITT spoke to order. He observed that this was not the stage of the bill in which the honourable Baronet ought to enter into particular details. The nature of the Commissioners' oath had no connection with the question before the House, which was that “the report be taken into farther consideration.”

Mr. SPEAKER said, there were two stages in which it was allowed to comment upon the details of a bill: these were when it was in the Committee, and upon receiving the report. He had always been of opinion, that when the report was taken into consideration, both the principle and particular clauses might be debated.

The honourable Baronet was not, therefore, out of order, as he might call the attention of the House to parts of the bill, in order that it might be recommitted for the purpose of having these parts rescinded or altered.

Sir W. PULTENEY continued; he said, though the Commissioners were sworn to secrecy, yet the Ministers, he supposed, would have access to their books, because they were bound to preserve them. He therefore considered this as a dangerous measure,

inasmuch as it rendered the property of the country less secure. This mode of raising taxes had not been used since the accession of the present family to the Throne; but during the Protectorate there was an assessment upon every man from one end of the kingdom to the other; this had the effect of rendering the people more slavish, and ultimately led to the Restoration. After that period it was intended to continue that assessment, but it was found impossible to extend it to personal property; but the land tax remained. The tax did not commence to operate upon incomes of less than 60*l.* per annum; and after 200*l.* all were equal. It appeared to him that it would operate severely upon the middle class of society, and not so much on the higher classes. He conceived that the liberty of the people depended upon the middle class, and not either upon the higher or the lower classes. If the middle class was destroyed, then there would remain nothing but nobles and peasants. Country gentlemen approved of this measure, because they thought it would operate upon property that was not taxed before; in this he believed they would be mistaken; but with respect to themselves, they would certainly be obliged to pay. The lower classes would also in time be affected by it, because if the farmer or manufacturer was injured, he could not employ so many persons. The bill appeared to him, on the whole, to go against the spirit of the Liberty of the Country. This was not a new opinion; he had delivered his opinion to the public upon a question of this kind twenty-four years ago. In defence of this measure it was said, it affected placemen and pensioners, and that they would not for their own sakes consent to a tax which affected themselves, if it was not a just tax. This was a mode of reasoning upon which he did not lay much stress, because Government had it always in their power to compensate those gentlemen for what they might pay. He wished to know why the commercial part of the community were entitled to such exclusive privileges, and why the rest of society were not entitled to the same advantages. With respect to the duration of the bill, he wished to observe that it must continue three years, and if the war lasted another year, it must continue four years. But there was nothing stated in the bill which would prevent its being adopted in future. It was not stated that it was merely a war tax, nor was it stated when it would cease, but merely that it should not cease before a certain period. Upon these grounds he thought there would be great danger in passing the bill, and therefore should oppose it.

Right Honourable D. RYDER stated, that he should not now enter into the details of the bill; and he should feel, he said, that

it would be presumption in him to offer an answer to the fundamental arguments, if he had not great authority on his side, no less an authority than that of the honourable Baronet himself. As far as it was regular to advert to what had occurred on a former debate, he conceived that the opposition of the honourable Member was, that the measure tended to establish a species of inquisition in the country. That certainly was totally separate from what was advanced as the main objection now to the bill. Every objection against this still, as to its not being optional, was applicable to the bill passed last year. The only point upon which a difference was entertained was, that it did not go far enough; that it only tended to raise seven millions, whereas a much larger sum might be raised. He had also the farther authority of the honourable Baronet, that it might be expedient to raise the whole sum wanted within the year. Whether the honourable Member had stated his ideas then clearly or not, he knew not; but he had a right to say that it was the honourable Baronet's opinion, that at one time the raising of the whole supply within the year, and at another time the raising of a considerable part within the year, was essential to the interests of the country. But the honourable Member had now found an objection that would be fatal to the measure altogether. The objection was, that the sum wanted was taken by a tax that was not optional—that it was not imposed upon articles that were optional—and that the measure was unknown in the financial history of the country. He certainly did not pretend to be deeply read in the financial history of the country; but it must occur to gentlemen that poll taxes, the tenths, fifteenths, and subsidies, were levied in former times, and that the same objection would apply to all those taxes; but this might be said to refer to a period when the science of finance was not properly understood. Look at the tythes, which produced from three to five millions: they were not optional. Look at the taxes imposed since the present century. The land tax was not optional; it made no distinction of classes; it made no difference between the poorest and the richest landholders. The whole system of taxation which related to the levies for the maintenance of the poor was another material instance of a tax not being optional. The same observation would apply to the county rates, and the bridge rates. When he was stating this as being historically an objection, he was aware that he was not stating it fairly for himself. For when, in a country acknowledged to have been the best administered with respect to its finances of any nation in the world, he was representing what had been done in former times, he was stating what was the best defence of that system. There

were many other taxes which were also not optional. A tax which had been adopted after the example of Holland, which, next to this country, had been the best governed in its finances ; the tax upon collateral successions was not optional. The whole of the Assessed-Tax Bill was not optional. Many persons, indeed, might live in houses of less rent than they did, but it was impossible for them to live in houses that paid no tax. But upon the whole question, would the House be doing any thing but a foolish mockery by asserting, that in taxes upon consumption persons might make use of the particular articles or not, as they pleased ? The honourable Baronet, therefore, having stated himself to be a friend to the levying a considerable part of the supply within the year, and not having stated any other mode of raising it, he was bound to suppose, that if he was a friend to the raising at one time ten, or at another twenty millions in the year, he either must see this idea of a compulsory tax in a different light from what he did, or must argue that it ought to be levied upon articles of consumption. Upon this point he would ask, could the House conceive it possible to levy ten millions upon what were considered as luxuries ? Had it not been found that when they had been taxed beyond a certain point, the luxury shifted and the tax failed ? How far it would be safe to levy it upon such taxes as the powder tax, he would leave for the House to judge. If then it was admitted that to raise the tax upon the luxuries was impossible, it followed of course that it could only be levied upon the necessaries of life. Was that the mode by which the honourable Baronet meant to provide for the middle or the poorest classes ? Was that the mode to accumulate the load upon the higher ranks ? A tax on the necessaries of life must raise the wages of labour. If this was the mode which the honourable Baronet meant to suggest, it was perfectly evident that any tax, if levied upon articles of consumption, must be heavier than the present one. Upon the whole, the consideration of this question had impressed upon his mind that this was the only mode that could be adopted with perfect equity, and with a probable hope of reaching that great end which all had in view. And he was the more strongly impressed with this, because those persons who had no apparent disposition to avoid finding all the faults they could, had yet not been able to state any thing which could afford a hope of attaining the same object. It was on these grounds that he supported the present bill.

Mr. JONES said, we were placed between two evils : we had to dread, on the one hand, the horrible evils of the French Revolution ; and, on the other, the evils that must necessarily arise from

any measure entrenching on the Constitution. When he voted for the triple-assessment bill of last session, he expressed his anxiety about its nature, and declared it to be a strong measure; but the situation of the country at that period and now was very different. We were then threatened with invasion; that storm was blown over. The French navy, instead of being in a state capable of carrying the designs of the enemy into effect, was destroyed, and we were glutted with our victories. The cases were, therefore, different; and consequently the grounds of opinion materially changed. For his part, he was willing to support the mode proposed of raising the supplies within the year, but he was also determined to defend the blessings of the Constitution, which the present bill, he really conceived, would tend to move from its centre. For this reason, therefore, he must oppose its farther progress; for it would erect an inquisitorial power in the country, not only unknown to the spirit of our Constitution, but totally subversive of it.

Mr. DENT supported the bill, and observed, he wished the report should be followed up on the very ground on which the honourable gentleman who spoke last objected to its farther progress, being convinced that, instead of injuring the Constitution, it would, on the contrary, have the effect of preserving it.

Mr. I. H. BROWNE rose to express his approbation of the measure. There were two observations that had fallen from the honourable gentleman who spoke last, but one which he would take the liberty to notice: first, an abhorrence of French principles, whose fatal influence had done so much mischief in the world; and, secondly, the danger of an abuse of liberty; and that we should not be led to extend the privileges beyond the bounds which absolute necessity prescribed. To both these he heartily acquiesced, but he did not see any danger to the constitution from the adoption of the present measure. He did not consider it as an invasion of property, in which light it was by some represented. Nobody could state it more clearly than the honourable Baronet (Sir William Pulteney), both with regard to its principles and effects; yet nothing in his statement justified him in considering the measure an invasion of property: that a disclosure of property might follow, notwithstanding every possible care to guard against that inconvenience, was no reason for considering it in that point of view, and yet it was the principal one offered. Such a circumstance, no doubt, was an objection, but we were not in a situation now to yield to trivial inconveniences; when a great and alarming evil threatened, we were not to consider every possible and remote particular instance of hardship that may ultimately arise from the means necessary to insure our

safety. These means, it was agreed, consisted in raising the supplies within the year. This mode was practised before the Revolution. If then we were to recur to it, we must have recourse to the means used before that period; means exercised in the reigns of the Plantagenets, and other antient times, without ever being charged as new or dangerous to the Constitution. He therefore thought it our duty to adopt the same system now, when so much benefit must be derived from it, and when, by the strength of our navy, we had the means not only of providing for our own safety, but also of effecting the deliverance of Europe. Mr. Browne concluded with apologizing for troubling the House so long on a question so obvious, and which had been already so fully discussed.

Mr. Wm. SMITH said, that though he rose again to offer some objections to the bill, yet he was very ready to confess, that it now appeared to him in a much more improved light, and very different indeed from the crude, imperfect state in which it was first ushered into the House; he was happy in particular to see that much of its oppressive and inquisitorial tendency had been obviated and removed. He was still, however, justified in asserting, that the objections urged against it by himself and by many of his honourable friends, had been either misunderstood or misrepresented; at least, they had never been fairly met or satisfactorily answered. There was one great error into which the supporters of the bill had fallen. They charge the opposers of it with inconsistency, because they have acknowledged the propriety and necessity of raising a great portion of the supplies within the year. But on what principle do they rest this necessity, or of what nature do they suppose it to be? He was but little inclined to indulge in minute metaphysical distinctions; but some distinction was necessary on the present occasion. The necessity so much insisted on must be either a physical or political necessity; if it were a physical necessity, or if no other possible mode could be devised of accomplishing the same end, then he would unreluctantly yield to that necessity, and no longer make any opposition to the adoption of it. But if upon due examination of the nature of the measure, it did not appear to involve any thing of a physical necessity, but only proceeded on the ground of a political necessity, then the nature of that political necessity should be duly inquired into—in his opinion political necessity should be guided by a nice balance of the conveniencies and inconveniencies to which the measure might give rise. If the conveniencies were proved to preponderate over the inconveniencies, then, he would confess, the necessity might be fairly pleaded. But if, on the contrary, however it might be attended with many inconveniencies, yet it plainly ap-

peared that in its principle it was unjust, that in its execution it was oppressive, and that in its operation it must prove hurtful both to the feelings and the fortunes of individuals, he was at a loss to see how he should be justified in admitting the plea of such a political necessity. To these, his objections, he was well aware that the approvers of the bill would oppose a directly contrary assertion. They, he knew, asserted, and would assert, that the principle and provisions of the bill were equitable and just. He, however, must persist in styling them unjust and unequitable, and in this assertion he persisted, not from the suggestion of any private interest, but merely from public motives and upon public grounds; for he was ready to confess that the tax, as far as it regarded himself individually, he should feel to be a very beneficial one. But he had heard it asserted that a large majority of the citizens of London had declared in favour of the tax, and were he permitted to be so far irregular as to allude to what had dropped in a former debate, he would be glad to offer a few observations on the arguments that were then employed. It was said that the body of merchants were both able and willing to pay the tax, though they contend at the same time that this very tax must fall with double weight on persons embarked in commercial pursuits. They were still, however, well prepared and well disposed to pay it. That merchants of the first order and under particular circumstances might be able and willing to pay the tax he was not inclined to deny, without attempting to dive into the motives or the means from which this will and ability might be supposed to flow. There was, however, another class of commercial men, of whom the same could not be said with equal truth; the class he alluded to was of a much lower order, and possessed of far inferior resources. On them, he contended, the proposed tax must bear with very oppressive weight indeed. But this, perhaps, would be denied. And why? Because it is asserted that the object of the measure is to lay equal burdens on all species of income, though the income may be of an unequal nature, and to affect every situation in life in which property was to be found. He would grant that the operation of the tax began, as in the Assessed-tax Bill of last year, with a property of 60*l.* but two persons possessing that amount of income were no longer in the same relative situation; one part of that income may, for example, be laid out in an insurance for life; that part employed in insurance on life is now supposed to be exempted. He could not see in what that exemption consisted; for if a man possesses an income of 500*l.* he may employ one half of it in insurance for life, and the other in providing for his family; but that income must be doubly assessed, for the

tax is to take away one portion, and insure another of it. Suppose in making provision for his family, he lays up one part, and that he pays 50*l.* per annum for insurance, in what situation shall such a man be if any accident, even the payment of the now proposed tax, should disable him from insuring; where then would be the benefit which you suppose him to derive from the exemption? He could derive none. For you now take 50*l.* per annum from him, and thus prevent him from benefit of insurance, while insurance would be more valuable to him.

In the next place he might contend, that the measure in question would draw down other hardships on commercial men; for the proposed mode of taxation partakes of the nature of a positive tax upon capital. The capital may be supposed to grow and become income; but the profits of trade do not constitute a disposable surplus; out of them the merchant must provide for his family; to tax those profits, would not therefore be taxing income, but taxing capital. The measure went also to confound an income arising from laborious industry, an income purely contingent, and which before the next year may sink into nothing, with one of a permanent nature and exposed to no vicissitudes; but to tax in equal rate two incomes of such very opposite conditions, would surely be committing a great, a crying injustice. Nor did he think, that to him or to those who held the same opinions with him on a former occasion respecting the propriety of taxing salaries arising from places and public offices, there could now be imputed any degree of inconsistency; those salaries were not solely the reward of laborious industry, they were the source also of enjoyment, as well as of emolument. Yet it would be said that they formed part of the income of such persons, and therefore would be taxed. But other considerations should be here attended to, and on this point he would again avail himself of the opinion and authority of an able writer, whom he had already quoted pretty frequently on the present subject, and according to that celebrated author, those who were in the situation of holding public offices, have general means of rewarding their labours, and the remuneration seldom falls short of the services they perform; and therefore such emoluments were not an improper object to be taxed as income. These salaries were often, besides, but a small part of such income. The power, the patronage, the credit and the consideration that attended them, were valued much higher than the mere salary annexed to them, and they were consequently sought after with more eager avidity than situations of a different description that ostensibly were estimated at comparatively

a much higher sum. They were, therefore, by no means on a level with other sorts of income.

He must also object to the measure on account of the manner in which it must affect various classes of the community. Notwithstanding all that had been said of public affairs, and respecting the situation of other countries, the operation of this bill might induce many to emigrate, though it was strongly asserted that no one would change this country for another merely to avoid paying ten per cent. upon his income—for, though the mode of inquiry and of the disclosure of private circumstances might be somewhat changed, yet even in the altered bill there still remained many circumstances which must throw many difficulties on particular branches of trade. The advantages were still counterbalanced by the disadvantages. Indeed where a great revenue was to be collected, there must arise many inconveniences; and they marked but too strongly our general system of taxation. The excise laws, for example—the stamp duties, &c. &c. involved in their execution a variety of difficulties and inconveniences. In lawsuits the particular circumstances respecting stamps often gave rise to very unpleasant occurrences; for instance, in a late case, where the decision, he would not say was contrary to law, but where assuredly it was contrary to equity; he alluded to the case where a stamp of 2s. 6d. was made use of, instead of a stamp of 2s. which the law imposed for a particular sum. In that case nothing could be recovered, though no intention of eluding the tax could be alledged, as a stamp of superior value was made use of. But it was not only from the taxes themselves, but from the caprices of the tax gatherers, that the community had to suffer these inconveniences; nor were they only inconveniences, but frequently vexations.

But the operation of the present bill must prove far more unjust, far more vexatious, than that of any of the taxes he had just alluded to; and on this account, and no other, did he continue to oppose it. The tax has, indeed, been justified by an historical comparison with other taxes—it had been compared with the poll tax—this comparison was surely not very happy; for if it bore any relation to that tax, it ought most certainly to convince us, that the idea of it should never be entertained. For has not that tax been reprobated and placed in the most odious light by our best and most approved writers? It has also been compared with the poor's rate; but this also was far from being a popular tax: and besides, they differed so widely from one another, that no parity of argument should be drawn from them. It is true, the poor's rate must be paid

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either individually or parochially ; but it differs from the present tax in many instances, but particularly in this, that it is dispensed by the same hands that collect it, and the distribution of it is watched over by those out of whose pocket it comes. This contributes to make it be paid cheerfully. By others the present tax is compared to tithes ; but there there is often room for commutation, and therefore the comparison says nothing in favour of the measure before the House. Moreover, when a person buys a farm, he knows the amount both of the poor's rates, and of the tithes, which he shall have to pay ; and therefore his case differs from the present, where there is no option. But it is said the principle of the Assessed-tax Bill left no option neither—Granted : it did so in some measure, and so far he had objected to it. But his objections rose here from a number of grounds—it was granted that it would operate on inequalities of income. But was it not the object of a good Government to correct those inequalities ? Surely it was as much the duty of Government to correct them, as to make laws to protect the weak against the strong. He saw another objection to it in the discretion which the present measure gave to Government. Ministers were left to fix the standard, and he saw no reason for their fixing on the standard which they had adopted. But he was told he had no right to object to the plan now proposed, unless he could offer one less objectionable. Undoubtedly the approvers of the bill might see it in a different light from him ; but though his judgement was not able to correct what was wrong in the measure, yet he was not inconsistent in opposing it ; and as long as he felt the full force of his objection to it, so long must he continue that opposition.

Lord HAWKESBURY thought it more desirable to make any remarks gentlemen had to offer on the detail of the bill, as connected with its principle, after receiving the report, than upon the question then before the House. The question was not so much whether the tax was an equal one, as whether it was as equal as possible, whether more so than any other that could be devised either by him, or any other Member who might approve of or oppose it. He must think the tax was the most equal, and the fairest in its principle, that could be adopted, under all circumstances, fully to answer the end for which it was proposed. What had been said by the honourable gentlemen who spoke last, that it was no argument to prove the inconsistency of any gentleman, that while he disapproved of any measure he yet had not a better to propose, he could perfectly agree in ; but if it was not an argument of this sort, it certainly afforded an argument for the measure. Nothing could more tend to shew how necessary it was to adopt the present tax,

than that after the exertion of much talents in the investigation of its principle and detail, nothing so efficient, in fact, nothing at all, had been offered in the way of substitute. This must be so much felt by the House, that he should forbear urging the argument farther. If, indeed, the arguments of the honourable gentleman amounted to any thing, the objection comprised in them was in its nature to all taxation. Would the honourable gentleman say that taxation was a grievance? He could also say it was a grievance, and wished as cordially as any man that no necessity existed for continuing to tax any description of people. But in the present state of the world and of society, these were vain wishes; and as taxes must be levied and imposed, his solicitude must be rather to regulate justly all plans of taxation, than seek in the abstractions of men of science for arguments against taxes in general. He was certain there was not a Member of that House or the community, who more than himself felt for the classes most likely to be affected by any tax; and no gentleman could think there was any thing so amiable, pretty, or gentle in taxation, that it was a delightful duty to attend to its progress and detail. But while the people would not expect that taxation was to cease, while Government could only be supported by means of taxation, they had a right to expect that the law should lay taxes equally and impartially, and more than this no community could expect. The honourable gentleman had not contented himself to object to the present tax in particular, but thought proper to go into a laborious inquiry concerning the origin and effect of every kind of tax, beginning with the excise, poll tax, &c. He had thought it his duty also to consider the nature of taxes in general, and had no hesitation to say, that there was no tax without great objections on all sides. This could not, however, afford any argument against taxation; it merely shewed, that it was in the nature of all human institutions, of human laws, and human actions, to be every where imperfect, and that the Legislature and Government would sufficiently discharge their united duties, if in framing laws, the one calmly and dispassionately considered the nature of man and his habits, making laws that embraced their necessities, and did not overlook their wants—while the other, in enforcing those laws, proceeded with tempered firmness, with benevolent and ardent disinterestedness. The bill then under consideration was not oppressive in any degree that could possibly be avoided, and the tax it sought to impose had for its object what was a favourite measure with the House—to raise a great part of the supplies within the year. It was clear that the present was the only tax adequate to this great purpose: it was the best that he ever heard of, and in the present state

of the country, in the state of our finances and public debt, much better than any optional tax, because no tax of this sort could go so far or so effectually to afford that general stability to our credit, and infuse that vigour into our operations, which the crisis eminently required. The honourable Baronet talked of an optional tax being fairer in its principle than one direct in its character. Now what was this doctrine of optional taxes? What the advantages to the public from the laws by which they are imposed? Why, truly, that on one side there is scarce any option at all. The articles of consumption are for the most part of the first necessity, or luxuries which men cannot refuse; and thus no alternative is, in most cases, left. No tax could be mentioned to which this remark could not more or less apply. It was true of wine, and true of almost every other taxable article mentioned by the honourable Baronet. So that if from optional taxes men might sometimes derive some convenience, it also subjected individuals to severities. The trader would have his tax paid him in profit, and the consumer would pay the tax, indeed he could not help it, by paying the insurance or profit of the dealer. He thought it scarce necessary here to take notice of the argument which had been founded on a comparison of contingent with certain income. This was a subject which he had considered long before the present bill was ever heard of. The honourable Baronet and the honourable gentleman on the same side of the House, complained of what they considered the partiality and injustice of the tax in this respect. Now he thought it would be found, that the advantage is, under all possible changes of fortune to a country, in favour of the man of increasing income. Such were the trader and the professional man for instance; such, in short, every class of the community almost, except the landed men, or the person whose income is permanently fixed. The man of the latter description, who must always wish to make an appearance suited to his rank and character, will be obliged to retrench, while yet his income is not at all subject to progressive increase; whilst the man of professional resources may be daily increasing his income, and can therefore afford always to keep his usual establishment. It might not be improper to remark, that here the argument of the honourable gentleman had changed a little; for on a former evening one argument was the hardship to persons having certain incomes; that evening it was that persons not having permanent incomes will suffer most by the tax. An honourable gentleman had on that evening, and once before, quoted Mr. Adam Smith in several instances to illustrate his argument, that property should not be exposed by any tax. But what was property? and who were

the rich? Property was the command of the luxuries and necessities of life; and the rich were the distributors. From this it followed, that whatever tax it might be that affected the poor, must necessarily affect the rich. Hence would he recur to what he formerly said, but what could not be too frequently repeated, that the duty of that House was not to reject all measures of taxation, but to render them as little capricious and unequal as possible. What would be the effect of the present bill? It would lay a tax generally on all with less convulsion in all the classes of society than would be occasioned by any other practicable tax. He had heard much of Jacobins and their system of levelling all classes to one vulgar standard. The present tax had, indeed, been objected to on the presumed ground that its effect would be to level distinctions, but he was far from entertaining this opinion; on the contrary, he believed the tax would extensively afford the means of preserving that order and just distinction of classes which God and Nature every where wisely established and maintained. An honourable gentleman had said, that to afford any relief to persons likely to be more affected by the tax than others, was to forget the principle of the bill. In his opinion this remark was both weak and futile. It was the duty of the House to consider the situation of every class of people, and to endeavour to make every new tax bear upon them with as little weight as possible. It was his wish and that of those whom he had the honour of supporting, that the tax might fall equally, and, as was said on a former evening, not cruelly nor unjustly on one class, whilst others enjoyed undisturbed the possession of their ample fortunes. Once for all, he would impress it on the House, that the wish nearest his heart was to preserve the orders of society, administering to each an equal measure of justice, watching over the character, the lives, and the liberties of all, and by making a general allowance to poor and rich, freeing the present measure from every severity of character, and giving it as a precedent to all future time, that it is eminently the desire of the Members of the British Senate to give to every scheme of finance the emphatical character of a fair, an impartial, and equal measure; that it seeks to impose a fair, an impartial, and equal tax. Upon those general grounds the motion would receive his hearty support.

Sir FRANCIS BARING had no objection to pay one tenth of his income, and every mercantile man with whom he had conversed appeared equally willing to pay in a similar proportion towards the exigencies of the State, and to enable the Government of the Country to maintain themselves with firmness and dignity in the present contest. But while, in common with others, he was thus

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perfectly free to contribute his share, what he objected to was, and this was the objection of commercial men in general, that the present tax would subject men to a disclosure of their property. The wealthy and the poor had equally to dread the effect of such a tax in its operations; and as far as this objection went, no man at all conversant with mercantile affairs could hesitate to oppose it. He could not help regretting, that the measure was introduced in such haste, without going farther in the experience of the affected taxes. If these were evaded, why did not the right honourable gentleman take them as far as they would go, and propose some tax less objectionable than the present, to make up the deficiency. However, he would not oppose the report being received and sent to a Committee, if he could but assure himself that better means would be found to prevent the disclosure of property, and of the most sacred affairs of men.

Sir JAMES PULTENEY wished that the same precaution to prevent the disclosure of property had been adopted with respect to the man of landed property, as in the case of the commercial man. The latter was naturally jealous of any measure that tended to lay his concerns open to the inspection of persons unconnected with his trade, and, perhaps, uninterested in his fortune; the former must equally dread a survey that is to inform strangers of his most private and most delicate transactions. This was one of the objections he had to the measure in its present state. In the next place he thought it would be proper to extend the scale beyond 200*l.* per year, as he was certain that persons of this income, and considerably beyond it, were very little able to bear such a burden in addition to the many they at present must sustain. And when he considered the present flourishing state of the country, its extended commerce, and invincible fleets, he must say, he thought a more palatable tax might be imposed; at any rate, it could not be too much to render it less irksome by rendering it less burdensome. He wished to set a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Ryder) right respecting what had fallen from an honourable friend of his (Sir William Pulteney) on the subject of direct taxation. It appeared to him, that what the honourable Baronet said was, that a direct tax was liable among others to one great objection, namely, that it would give a greater power to Ministers than an optional tax, because the latter could be evaded, but the former could not; and as every man would be obliged to put his hands in his pockets at the call of the Minister to pay a direct tax, the grievance would be, that men would continually have their hands in their pockets to supply his wants, under whatever circumstances they may have arisen. Still there was no

doubt that direct taxes were the cheapest in the collection and the most productive, and therefore, in considering this subject, due care must be shewn to the balance of advantages and disadvantages mutually arising on the one side and on the other.

Mr. BURDON was a friend to the measure, but wished that it might be carried into effect with as little inconvenience to the public as possible. He thought the assessed taxes were not more optional than the present tax; and every tax was liable to be objected to if it was a ground of objection that no tax is wholly optional. Gentlemen had talked much of the liberty of the subject. Undoubtedly it was important to watch around and guard the liberty of the subject; but there was another description of liberty which he should think it his duty more vigilantly to watch and more vigorously to defend—it was national liberty; which could not, perhaps, be better supported than by preventing frauds in the payment of national taxes. Naturally he was unfriendly to every species of fraud, and thought the man who could defraud the revenue, if he had a fair opportunity, would defraud his neighbour. The object of the present tax was to assert the independence, and maintain the liberties of the country; and he took it upon himself to pledge his constituents to pay any tax that might tend to support our national liberty: nevertheless, he wished as much as any man that taxes could be abtained from, and would be happy if he lived to be a Member of that honourable House when all taxation ceased. One additional reason he had for approving of the present was, that it is fairer than the assessed taxes, because it will affect persons who are certainly interested in the prosperity and safety of their country, and as well include capitalists as lay an equal burden on every species of income. Under these circumstances he should consider it his duty to support the motion.

Mr. HENRY THORNTON observed, that he would only trespass a few moments on the House. In considering the bill, undoubtedly many difficulties would appear to characterize parts of its detail; but the principle entirely met his approbation; and while he wished it were possible to make it entirely palatable, by removing every difficulty and obviating every objection; yet when he looked to the object of the tax, he must be permitted to consider even those difficulties as being comparatively unimportant. The object of the tax was to enable us to carry on with vigour, and effect a war the most interesting in its general character, to whose issue we must look for independence and for glory, carried on against one whose ambition disturbed and disordered the world. Every reflecting man who had delivered his sentiments on the measure, approved of the prin-

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ciple of raising the supplies within the year, and therefore the question was not whether we should raise 100,000*l.* or 200,000*l.* or 1,000,000*l.*; but whether we should raise 10,000,000*l.* This was no ordinary measure, and ordinary objections could not, with any propriety, be urged against it. He thought those gentlemen wrong who sought to lay the tax on property; for the disclosure of property must be more objectionable to every class of men, as it would be more indelicate than the disclosure of income. Perhaps it would be a better mode to lay a tax both on capital and income, than on income only; for a tax on capital would reduce the tax on income. Considering the reception it met with in the country, and the temper of the House, he must approve of the present tax, especially as no other measure was proposed adequate to the object sought for, and seeing that the only point at which we were vulnerable to the enemy is in our finances—for now internal treason was suppressed, our navy every where triumphant, protecting our possessions abroad, or conveying in safety our trade with every part of the world. Seeing this, and being persuaded at the same time that the present measure was calculated to afford a strong means of defence on the point which we are most vulnerable, he could not but give it every support in his power. It would be to take up the time of the House unnecessarily were he to press upon them any argument to shew the settled design of the enemy to make his most determined but insidious attack at that point. While France could fancy that she saw in our finances the seeds of their own derangement, she would carry on the war with all her accustomed malevolence; and we ought by this time to have already discovered, that directing her efforts at times against our finances, on other occasions against our trade, they have endeavoured, by destroying our trade, to come at our finances. It was no mean consideration to take every practicable step to prevent their succeeding in these projects. And again, if any body would look at the national debt, so much increased since the termination of the American war, and in the present war, they must see that the debt cannot be increased illimitably, nor can taxes on consumable articles. It was therefore necessary to begin at once to reduce the debt, and provide in a different way for the interest. That the consumable articles cannot bear increased taxation was manifest, because though the taxes have much increased, they have not grown proportionably productive. Hence would it be seen, that some other source of revenue must be opened, and the present tax was this source. Whenever the finances were completely established beyond all possibility of danger from the insidious designs of the enemy, national credit would be revived, the means of making

money by putting property in the funds increased, and prosperity and security would every where be found. Under these circumstances, he approved most heartily of the present measure.

Mr. MARTIN wished that the bill might be proceeded in, and he was ready to vote for it; but if in the farther progress he saw any greater difficulty arise, or a better plan proposed than what was now before them, he thought proper to reserve to himself the liberty of voting against the bill altogether.

The question was now put and agreed to without a division. After the first amendment was read,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that from the lateness of the hour, and from the nicety of several points which still remained to be discussed, it was his opinion that the farther consideration of the report should be postponed till to-morrow, when gentlemen's minds would be fresher and better able to enter on the discussion.

Mr. W. SMITH observed, that though it was a much later hour when the House were going into the Committee on this bill, yet the right honourable gentleman would not admit the argument which he now employed himself. If there was not great inconvenience to be feared from it, he rather felt with the right honourable gentleman that the business should be now continued.

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that it was not to suit his own convenience, or that of any particular gentleman, that he was anxious to postpone the farther consideration of the report, but merely for the benefit of the matter itself. He then concluded by moving, that the report be taken into farther consideration to-morrow; which motion was agreed to.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS moved the farther consideration of the report on the bill for exempting, under certain conditions, persons serving in volunteer corps from being balloted into the supplementary militia. The motion being agreed to, Mr. Dundas proposed the new amendments which he mentioned yesterday, which were adopted; and the bill was then ordered to be engrossed.

Friday, December 28.

The Habeas-Corpus Suspension Bill was read a third time and passed.

On the order of the day being moved for the House to take the report of the Committee on the Income Bill into consideration,

Mr. DENT rose and complained of the very thin attendance of Members. He was not aware of any mode of enforcing the pre-

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sence of gentlemen, otherwise than by a call of the House, and he therefore trusted it would be resorted to before the report was considered. He could not avoid observing, that when a measure, which was to have the effect of disposing of twelve millions of the public money, was under discussion, the conduct of those who did not attend was most disgraceful.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that no person entertained the least doubt with respect to the disposal of the sum of ten millions. When the principle of the bill had been discussed on former evenings, the attendance had been generally pretty full; and if in a later stage of it gentlemen did not think fit to attend, it was because, on the leading points, there was no difference of opinion. He wished the honourable gentleman to consider, whether a call of the House would have the effect of enforcing attendance. It might, it was true, oblige gentlemen to walk into the House, but could not prevent them from walking out again immediately, if they pleased.

The House proceeded to take the report into consideration, when the several amendments in the bill were read and agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, a clause had on a preceding evening been proposed by an honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney), for preventing the production of the schedule at the request of the surveyor, unless the application was approved of by the majority of the Commissioners; that motion the Committee had rejected. He, however, now wished to propose a clause, which should even go beyond the object of the honourable gentleman: it was, that no schedule should be delivered at the request of the surveyor, if the application was rejected by even one of the Commissioners. This, he trusted, would obviate every objection on this subject.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt said, that he found it necessary to propose several alterations in the clauses, as well as amendments in the body of the bill. He should therefore wish the House to resolve into a Committee on those clauses which required alteration.

Mr. W. SMITH wished to know what difference there was in substance between recommitting the bill generally, and in the manner now proposed?

Mr. SPEAKER stated, that the object was to afford an opportunity of discussing the new clauses, leaving the body of the bill, as it stood before, open to amendments; but that to recommit it generally would have the effect of rendering the labours of the former Committee unavailing.

The question was put on Mr. Chancellor Pitt's motion, and the House resolved itself into the said Committee.

Mr. Chancellor PITT proposed a new clause, enacting, that persons who had children born in wedlock should be entitled to a deduction of their assessments in the following propositions:

"Persons possessed of 60l. per year and under 400l. per year, to be entitled to a deduction of 5l. per cent.

"Ditto possessed of 400l. per year and under 1,000l. per year, 4l. per cent.

"Ditto possessed of 1,000l. per year, and under 5,000l. per year, for such children as were six years of age, 3l. per cent.; for such as were under six years, 2l. per cent.

"Ditto possessed of 5,000l. per year and upwards, for such children as were six years of age, 2l. per cent.; for such as were under six years, 1l. per cent."

Such deductions to be made by the Commissioners on proof of the circumstances.

Mr. W. SMITH admitted the deductions were considerable, when compared to those under the assieted taxes. It had been observed, that the exceptions ought not to extend to persons having large incomes; this objection he considered unfounded; for persons of large incomes were not to be considered as compared with persons who had small ones, but with persons of the same incomes with themselves. Thus it would be highly unjust that a man of 5,000l. a year, who had a large family, should pay precisely the same sum as a man of 5,000l. a year, who had no family at all. With respect to the alteration for children under six years, he thought it hardly worth while to introduce.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the alteration he had thought necessary was, that with regard to persons above 1,000l. a year, there should be a distinction as to the ages of their children. It was evident, that to persons under a certain income, the expence of children was a material consideration, while to others above that income it was scarce any thing. What he had proposed appeared to be the fairest possible distinction; he thought it ought to apply neither to persons of above 1,000l. a year, nor under that sum.

An amendment was moved and adopted, that the clause should not apply, unless where such children were *principally* maintained by the parent.

Mr. JONES asked whether it applied to manufacturers who employed their children?

To which Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that the Commissioners would settle, whether it was such an employment as pre-

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vented such children being considered as principally maintained by their father.

The clause thus amended was agreed to.

The clause for allowing the Surveyor (in case he was dissatisfied with a person's statement of income, and required a schedule, and the Commissioners, upon inquiry, thought it unnecessary) to apply to Commissioners of Appeal for an order to the first Commissioners to re-examine the matter in dispute between the party and the Surveyor, was, after a conversation between Mr. Chancellor Pitt, Mr. Shawe Lefevre, Mr. Attorney and Mr. Solicitor Generals, and Mr. Tierney, agreed to.

Several other clauses were added to the bill.

The clauses being all gone through, the report was brought up, and ordered to be received to-morrow.

Saturday, December 29.

Mr. JOHN SMITH brought up the report of the Committee of yesterday for amendments in the body, and for receiving new clauses to the income bill. The amendments were all read and agreed to, and a number of new clauses were proposed by Mr. Chancellor Pitt, and adopted by the House.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he was desired by a number of noblemen and gentlemen of extensive possessions to ask leave of the House to bring up a clause for allowing them to deduct from their income before it be made chargeable by this bill, the allowance they made to their agents for managing their estates. He did not mean stewards, but persons who were necessarily employed in the management of their estates. These were not to be considered as persons employed out of parade, ostentation or indolence of the owners of the land, but were persons absolutely necessary for the management of estates where the possessions were extensive. Supposing, for instance, a man of fortune who had one estate at Berwick and another at Exeter, it would be impossible for such a person to attend to the management of both at once; he was, therefore, under the necessity of employing an agent. Bankers were allowed to deduct the salaries of clerks under the head of expences of management, and it seemed but reasonable that the necessary expences of management of land should have the same allowance.

Mr. Chancellor PITT was decidedly of opinion, that the cases of the banker and the great land owner in the expence of the management of their affairs was not at all parallel; that, generally

speaking, if a man did not chuse to manage his estate himself, he was not, upon public principles, an object of indulgence, so as to be excused from any part of the public burdens on that account. He added also, that the more extensive a man's estates were, the less reason he had to complain of this or any other impost.

There being no other clauses offered, the question was put, that the bill be engrossed?

Mr. JONES said that this bill comprehended every description of persons in this country, and as it was a matter of such intricacy, and of so much importance, he hoped time would be allowed between this and the third reading; it ought to have a full, free, and fair consideration after all these clauses were brought in, which, by Monday next, he was sure was quite impossible.

Mr. SPEAKER reminded the honourable Member there was no motion for the third reading before the House. The motion was, That the bill with the amendments be engrossed.

The question being put and carried,

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that this bill be read a third time on Monday next, if then engrossed.

Mr. JONES observed, that if the right honourable gentleman said it must be so, there was an end of it; but he really felt it to be quite impossible to understand the clauses produced to-day, by the time now proposed for the third reading. What would the inconvenience of a few days be, compared to the advantage of a full deliberation upon this subject? Let the one be but balanced against the other, and it would soon appear what course ought to be taken. He would ask, whether a bill, comprehending every description of persons in this country, should be read a third time in a day or two after so many material alterations had been made in it; or, whether it would not be better that every Member in the house should have an opportunity of understanding it? And, whether it was possible for Members to understand a bill in which there were forty or fifty clauses which none of them had ever read? For that was the case in the present instance. He, therefore, intreated the Chancellor of the Exchequer to allow the third reading to be deferred until Wednesday.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that this bill had undergone more ample deliberation and frequent discussion than any other measure he ever knew presented to that House. He saw no reason for any farther delay, especially as he had no hope that there would be a fuller attendance on Wednesday than on Monday next.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that the new clauses added to the bill were not at present understood by the House; it was impossible they

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should; and he thought that some allowance ought to be made on that account. The right honourable gentleman seemed to conceive that the clauses produced to-day did not materially alter the provisions of the bill. Now on the contrary, they did appear to him to be clauses materially altering the provisions of the bill. He agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, there was no better hope for a full attendance on Wednesday than on Monday. He was sorry to say that Members of that House neglected their duty in not attending; it was a negligence that was disgraceful to them, and he begged to be understood, as making no distinction in what he was now saying, but that he was applying it to both sides of the House. He had it now in his power to put an end to the farther progress of this bill for the present, for there were not present Members sufficient to constitute a House; if he desired that they be counted, an adjournment would be the effect of it; but this he would not do, because it would appear to be an invidious thing. This, however, is in the power of any Member of the House to do at any time when there were not forty Members present. That had frequently been the case in the course of the discussion of the present bill; and to speak plainly at once, he thought it a scandalous thing that a bill of this importance should have been discussed when it was so often in the power of any one Member, who probably might not have attended to any thing that had been passing, to put a stop to the progress of the bill; and yet such might have been the case frequently, and such it might be at this moment. He did not think this the right course of proceeding upon grave and important measures in that House. He did not indeed. If he did not find himself able to understand the bill as it now stood, after attending in every stage in the most minute detail, what must be the case of all those Members who had been out of town for the last week at least? How could those Members who were wavering in sentiments, whether they ought to vote for this measure, or against it altogether, make up their minds by Monday, so as to be enabled to give any conscientious vote whatever upon the subject? He knew there were many wavering upon the question altogether, whether they should adopt it as a matter of necessity to support the State, or whether they should reject it as hostile to the Constitution. Now if these Members, after they had attended the discussions of former parts of the bill, were wavering in their opinion, what must they be now, after the introduction of so many clauses, upon which there had been no discussion whatever; and which might be said to have opened the question again: for much might yet be said on the subject? He thought therefore, really, for the decency of the

proceedings of the House, after so many material alterations had taken place since the last discussion, that time should be allowed to prepare for another. The difference between Monday and Wednesday would not be very material as to the progress of the bill, though it might be much so to the preparations of some of the Members of the House, who might be desirous of delivering their sentiments upon it. He should therefore hope that the right honourable gentleman would not object to the third reading being deferred to Wednesday.

Mr. Chancellor PITT saw no reason whatever for postponing to Wednesday that which might more conveniently be brought forward on Monday, unless a fuller attendance was likely to take place on Wednesday than on the Monday, of which he entertained no hope, and therefore he must persist in his motion.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE thought the bill could not conveniently be delayed any farther in that House.

Ordered that this bill be read a third time on Monday next, if then engrossed.

Monday, December 31.

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT stated to the House, that on Saturday last he had conversed with Colonel Despard on the subject of the late statements made in the House respecting the treatment of the persons confined under the Habeas-Corpus Suspension Act, and also concerning the Letter published by Mrs. Despard. The result of that conversation proved to him the truth of every tittle contained in her Letter; and he had no doubt he should be able to induce the House to adopt the same sentiment: at present he should only give notice of his intention to move, as soon after the holidays as possible, for any inquiry into the state of the prisons; and the treatment of the prisoners confined by Government on suspicion of treason.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that on the adjourned question relative to a report that appeared on Wednesday last in *The Times*, of a conversation which took place in the House on the Saturday preceding, it was his desire that the order be discharged. This he did because he was well assured that the editor of that paper did not wish to give an inaccurate account of what had passed in the House, and he had good reason to believe that the account was sent to the editor by some person whose object was to misrepresent what had happened, but which person, he feared, he should never be able to bring forward, and to render responsible for what he had done. In-

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deed he must repeat what he had said already, that the proprietors and editors of papers having no interest whatever in misrepresenting what they heard in that House, but, on the contrary, a direct and considerable interest in the accuracy of the accounts they gave, he could not conceive how they could designedly misrepresent any thing. The House, however, knew very well that some inaccuracies must be inseparable from such an hasty publication as a newspaper was ; but he was really bound to believe they were not intentionally made vehicles of misrepresentation. He said this of the reports of the newspapers in general ; but, when an account was brought to a newspaper several days after the occurrence took place, and was inserted as an advertisement, the case was different, and there the intention of the misrepresentation was manifest, and the evil was greater too than if it appeared the day following the date ; for in the one case the error was likely to be detected by comparing one paper with another ; but, when it was published several days afterwards, that advantage was lost. There was no reason, however, in this case to impute to the editor of *The Times* any design to misrepresent what had taken place in the House ; and, as it was clear that somebody brought the account, and paid for it as an advertisement, and also, as he could not bring forward the author, it would be unjust to call upon the House to censure the editor.

He then moved, That the order of the day, to resume the debate upon the paper of *The Times* of Wednesday last, be read. Which being done, he moved, That that order be discharged.

The question being put,

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR observed, that the honourable gentleman who brought this matter forward might act as he thought proper, either to call for, or to desire to withdraw, the attention of the House from the matter now before it, and so far as it regarded the personal feeling of the honourable gentleman, no person had a right to judge upon the matter but himself ; but when this subject came before the House, he would say, without any disrespect whatever to the honourable gentleman, his feeling upon the matter was by far the least considerable part of it. This distinction was not much entered into when this subject was first introduced to the notice of the House ; but now that it came before the House, he should consider the question of a breach of privilege of that House upon its broad principle as it affected the State, and not as a narrow question of personal feeling. The nature of the question was the same whatever accident had brought it before the House, or whatever connivance might be imputed towards the House with regard to the publishing reports of its proceedings ; and therefore he should pro-

ceed on the question itself, without regard to the mode in which it had been brought forward to the notice of the House.

To proceed on an offence against the honourable gentleman who had complained of it, and to treat it as an act of guilt, as a libel upon that honourable gentleman, without taking notice of it as a breach of the privilege of that House, could not be regularly done. To treat it with severity at once in the person of the offender, was what he would not recommend, not only because there were other accounts of debates in which the name of the same honourable gentleman occurred, in which aspersions of the most malignant and venomous kind were poured forth, and which had hitherto passed in silence, but also because he thought it would be hardly fair now that they had a particular individual before them and in their power, proceeding to extremity with him in the first instance, and, as it were, on a sudden, and without notice. There were many instances of crimes in which the offender was not punished to the utmost rigour in the first instance; in the case of a highway robbery the law was to be pronounced at once, but not so in offences of inferior degree, and in some cases where the complexion of the thing was uncertain, where the intention of the party was doubtful, then he could not think of calling for the vengeance of the law. So in this case, although the thing itself was clear enough it was decidedly illegal, yet as some persons might have been led to think that the opinion of the Legislature upon the propriety of conniving at the matter was altered, and that such connivance to a certain degree warranted the practice, and therefore those who acted, however erroneously, on that opinion, had a claim, if not upon the justice, yet on the generosity of the House. But it would be dangerous to indulge any disposition to lenity in the second instance, for that led to a repetition of the argument by which the practice was attempted to be supported; for if the connivance of yesterday be a reason for to-day, to-morrow the reason will be stronger than it is now, and indulgence will give birth to the assumption of right; and thus the House, if they did determine upon the first case that came before it, would soon be debarred from vindicating, without the imputation of harshness, its own privilege. He thought that the conduct of the House would have been rigid, if it was to proceed to extremity on this sudden occasion; but he thought that an end ought to be put to that relaxation of duty by which the reporters of newspapers had been permitted to publish their proceedings; for it was a growing evil: and after having had fair warning, they would not have any reason to complain, for they ought to be taught that there is to be an end of the practice of detailing the proceedings of the

House; and although they could not pass over altogether the case of the person now before them, but they must censure his conduct in this first instance of their notice, yet, if any one should hereafter offend, he should be treated with greater severity.

Perhaps he felt more strongly than others the effect of this practice of reporting the proceedings of the House, and therefore was more ready than others to call for a remedy for the evil of relaxation of the duty of the House, it being only from that relaxation that such a practice could possibly arise. He knew a great number of persons who held all these things extremely cheap, and made very light of them; and therefore would be very ready to look with compassionate feelings towards any person who became the object of the resentment of the House for publishing any of its proceedings—who would smile at all these irregularities as trifles below the grave attention of a House of Parliament. He had no great respect for that sort of wisdom in itself. He knew how things apparently trivial in their nature, produced prodigious effects. He felt that it was to things in their appearance trivial at first sight, was owing the downfall of France. Things of a trivial nature were passed by as unworthy of notice, and, in less than twelve months afterwards, there tumbled a whole kingdom into a heap of ruins, and with its fall there appeared calamities which no mortal, not bereft of the feelings of humanity, ever yet beheld without horror. He therefore wished not to possess that species of philosophy which teaches to despise trifling things, however connected they may be with great ones: on the contrary, he saw great things arising out of those that were apparently little. Indeed, the whole system of human nature shewed how attentive we ought to be to those things that are commonly called trifles, since the existence of human life frequently depended upon them. If therefore this doctrine was applicable to the safety of the human frame, how could it be otherwise with regard to human institutions?

He thought the practice that had prevailed now for a considerable number of years was calculated to produce very serious consequences; for the general tendency of publishing the proceedings of that House was to change the Government from that of a Representative, as it stood now, to an entirely Democratic Government. But to take a consideration of two things, a Democratic Government entirely, and that of a Representative one, such as ours was at present, let us take a view of what was urged by some as the desirable perfection of our system, and what never, in fact, existed in the world—that all the people were actually represented, as well as virtually, and then let us see what the effect would be of publishing

the proceedings of Parliament daily to all the people. What would be the natural effect of such publication? It must be that of changing the present form of Government, and of making it a Democratical Government. That would in time be the inevitable consequence of such publications, for it was a daily appeal to the Public; it was calling every day on the Public to judge of the proceedings of Parliament—by these daily publications the people were taught to look upon themselves as present at the discussion of all the proceedings of Parliament, and sitting in judgement on them. This might be a very good and a very wise change when effected; but that he was not now arguing; he was only shewing that this change would be the consequence of the practice to which he had alluded. The change of the present Government of the Country into a Democratical Government, might be very good in the opinion of some; but certainly none would dispute it was a very great and material change—that it would be a material change, the proceedings of this day illustrated. How came this practice of reporting the proceedings of Parliament into being? It was not much above twenty years ago when it was first tolerated. Some of the predecessors of the Speaker now in the chair (Mr. Cust or Mr. Onslow for instance) would have been a good deal surprised that a practice of this kind was to be at all debated in the House of Commons. Either of them would have called forth, not the discussion, but immediate authority of the House, to take into custody any person who had presumed to publish any of its proceedings; but now it seemed the House was not to do this: the printer, poor innocent! had no evil intention; and therefore the motion, although involving a breach of privilege of that House, was to be withdrawn—this was very modern, and he would take leave to say, very mischievous doctrine. There would have been no difficulty about it formerly: gentlemen might say, there was no more difficulty now than there was formerly about shutting up the gallery: he was of another opinion; if the House shewed a disposition for yielding any point, its authority might, indeed, be made use of to destroy itself, for the connivance of the House had been abused, and so might its mildness; passing over such a breach of privilege after complaint made, would be an act of the House; it would have its authority; that authority would be quoted in answer to any complaint of another breach of privilege: thus the authority of the House would be made to destroy itself. This, however, was not viewing the point in its worst colours. The House might protect itself at any time, when a breach of its privileges came before it; but this was an abuse of the Constitution, and led to that condition of things in which there

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would be no room for prudence to conduct us—when the question would be, not for a Reform, but a Revolution. He should, for one, wish to see the House revert to the practice of times, when we had a Constitution that was worth something ; that was, when the House of Commons had before it any proof of a breach of its privilege, the House would at once vindicate its own dignity. The House should now follow the same plan as they did formerly, unless it was clear that any other was better, which he had not yet heard asserted, much less to be argued—He had not heard it yet alledged, that the modern was superior to the ancient practice in this particular. But to go back to the consideration that really ought to guide the House, to consider the effect of this practice in a distinct point of view ; the principle on which the House proceeded in some things, was, that what passed in the House would not pass out of the House, except what any Member might possibly relate to his friends. This could never be mischievous, for, besides the discretion which would generally guide the conduct of a Member of the House, and would keep him from repeating any thing that might be of an inflammatory tendency, it must be confined to a few hearers, and those above the lower classes of society, therefore the less easily tainted in their principles. But under the practice of reporting in the newspapers every thing that was said in that House, and which could not be said with safety any where else, was under the cover and authority of Parliament, and by this legerdemain of “reporting” scattered all over this kingdom, so that the most rank sedition that ever was yet thought of was not to be confined to the hearing of the House, and where the education and condition of the hearers would shield them from its influence, but was made public to all degrees and conditions of human beings, and that was published with the authority of a Member of Parliament, as a report of what was said, which could not any where else be published as an original work. Such things appeared to him to be monstrous. If any body were to ask him what he thought was the cause of that dreadful mutiny last year, which so reasonably alarmed every good man, and which, but for the wise precautions and vigorous exertions of Government, would soon have reduced this country to nothing, he would have said, it was the daily publication of the Debates of that House more than any thing else that could possibly produce it. He was not blaming gentlemen, or complaining of gentlemen, for saying the war was unjust and unnecessary ; if they thought so, they were right in so saying. But was it a desirable thing that the Public at large should from day to day, that the lower classes of the community from one end of the kingdom to the other, should be told so ?

That the sailors and the soldiers should be told that they were fighting against Justice and against the Liberty of Mankind; that they were the tools of Despotic Power; that their blood was shed, their lives taken or sacrificed to the folly or the wickedness of those by whom they were governed?—and all this coming from men of great weight from their talents, and in many respects of great credit in this country. Supposing all this language to be proper, he was saying that the effect of it must necessarily be dreadful to the community in which we live. It was then a question, Whether the House was justified in allowing to exist a cause which produced that effect, and that cause, too, arising out of a breach of the privilege of the House? It might be said, he knew, that this was answered by the publication of the doctrine maintained on the other side. This did not satisfy his mind. It led to a question that was too long for discussion in that House upon the present occasion, and opened a view into the general theme of political institution, and the means of diffusing throughout the world all species of political instruction. And here there was to be dreaded a double misrepresentation—the misrepresentation of the abuse, and the misrepresentation of the defence of Government; and therefore he who objected to the publication of either could hardly be said to be contented with the publication of both. Yet, if all this was only addressed to persons of great judgement, perhaps, he should not object to it;—but that was by no means the case; for the great mass of the readers of newspapers were not the most discerning class of society, nor was it to be expected they should be so, for the advertisements and other articles of which a newspaper was composed were often interesting chiefly to the lower orders of the community. They were for this very reason carried every where, read every where, by persons of very inferior capacities, and in common alehouses and places frequented chiefly by those who were least of all accustomed to reflexion, or to any great mental efforts. Gentlemen might say, and he knew many who were very fond of saying, “Let all persons be allowed “to judge for themselves.” This sounded pretty well; but it was a mere sound. Mankind had never yet been in circumstances that enabled the mass of them to judge correctly of any thing that required much mental exertion. Condemned as they were to labour of body, it had not yet been practicable for them to judge correctly of abstruse questions; and he knew of none that were more so, than such as arose out of the complication of political affairs. The people at large were entitled to justice; they were entitled to every favour that could be shewn to them consistently with their own safety, on which depended their own happiness; they were entitled to every

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advantage they could possibly be capable of enjoying, as much as the proudest person in the state ; but they had not education to enable them to judge of political affairs. Those were not their best friends who told them otherwise. If any gentlemen who heard him doubted this, he would ask them, whether they were in the habit of calling in their gardeners and their grooms to give their opinions upon political affairs? He knew they would do so when they met in large bodies, and made up the bulk of a gentleman's constituents, especially when their opinions were to be followed up by their votes ; for then the cajoling arts of the true demagogue were put in practice, and then was the multitude tempted, as the Devil tempted Eve, by telling them they had all sorts of perfection. After reflecting upon this, he hoped gentlemen would not be so ready to talk of the competency of the multitude to form correct opinions upon political affairs. But it might be said, that if the reports of the newspapers were stopped, some means would be found to circulate sentiments against Government, and that they would be more injurious to the public than these ; that something like Paine's Rights of Man would go forth. Such publications were circulated certainly, and they did very considerable mischief ; but they could not possibly have the effect of the newspapers, because as the circulation of them was attended with considerable expence, it could not be so extensive as the newspapers are, and therefore not such an evil ; nor were they so constant. It might be said, that by the publication of the debates of Parliament, the bane and antidote go both together. He did not think that such had hitherto been the effect of the publication of the debates, and he knew of nothing so likely to guide the judgement rightly as experience. In fact, the practice of reporting debates for the last fifteen or sixteen years, or for some years more, had contributed more to the evils of which many had complained of over the country, than any other practice he had heard of in that time ; it was an evil in its nature ; it was an inflammatory information at the best ; it kindled over again, and spread all over the country, that heat among the lower classes, which was sometimes deprecated, even in that House, as being likely to mislead those who possessed the best means of forming correct judgements. Such were the evils of teaching the lower classes of the community that they were politicians. Now if these were his ideas on the general effects of this practice, how did the case stand upon particular points that were to be considered incidentally ? It was a practice that struck directly at the dignity of the House. What was to be the character of that House in the eye of the public, if what passed in it was not only to be reported in the newspapers, but

a description was to be given also of the tone, manner, and action of each Member, like that of a criticism upon another description of persons, of whom he had no disposition to speak contumeliously, but of whom it was no disparagement to say, they were more adapted than the senate for public entertainment—he meant persons who were called actors. What was to become of the dignity of that House, he would ask, if the manners and gestures, and tone and action of each Member, were to be subject to the license, the abuse, the ribaldry of newspapers? There were but two remedies for this, as the practice now was, either for a Member to condescend to an altercation in the newspapers, with those who ridiculed him, or, what was the common case, to sit down tamely under it: really, unless the House thought it worth while to support its own dignity better, it hardly deserved better usage. But they would do well to take notice, what the effect might in time be of this ill-judged good nature. They might fall in the public estimation, as did another Assembly in another country, who soon felt the effect of letting strangers into their galleries, under the pretence, that the proceedings of the representative body should be open, and that no part of the people should be excluded from hearing it; the rabble of Paris, by bribery, and other despicable practices, got into the galleries, and their presence soon put an end to the representation of the country; it was soon turned into the mere semblance of a representation of that country. If that House was to give up its privilege, merely because it had for a while connived at the abuse of it; if the House was to be said to have the power of stopping up the footpath, and yet would not exclude a single passenger, he would have nothing farther to say. Gentlemen might talk of the matter as lightly as they pleased; but, unless they vindicated their privileges now, they might feel the effect of an ill-judged lenity. But he should leave this point now, and go back again to another evil, of which he had before complained, namely, that suffering newspapers to publish reports of their proceedings, would be allowing the evil itself to increase every day, for that very sufferance had of itself given occasion for the multiplication of public prints. The practice of publishing debates was an appeal from the representative body, to the people at large out of doors, of all orders, from the highest to the lowest. That newspaper writers were not the best judges of political affairs he considered as an undisputed point—to say nothing of their integrity—and this he conceived also to be an important point. That a great many of these newspapers were brought into existence, and nourished by debates in Parliament, was also a clear point; for he knew, that when there was a complaint made against a printer in the

year 1771, his plea was, that if the House took away from him the power of publishing the debates of that House, they would take away from him his bread. The House, if it allowed these debates to be continued, would put in action a poison which was circulated every twenty-four hours, and spread its venom down to the extremity of the kingdom. What, in the course of a very few years, was likely to be the effect of such a practice; into what hands newspapers would fall, whether they were likely to be friendly to good morals in future, from the specimen we had seen of them of late years, were points into which he would not now inquire. The question was not only whom these papers would find out, but also who would find out these papers, what sort of talents the owners of them were likely to possess, or, what was a larger question, what sort of talents those who were owners of papers might employ to write for them, were all of them points well worthy of the speculation of the House. Before they allowed newspapers to detail their proceedings, they would do well to consider how those who wrote for newspapers in general had contributed to the overthrow of the different Governments of the world, which had been lately overturned, and employed in causing so many insurrections as had lately rendered so much of the habitable globe uneasy. How much of the talents of those who wrote for newspapers had been employed in scattering poison wherever they could; in bringing virtue into discredit, by telling the people every where that those who professed it, and who ought to possess it, and who in general did possess virtue, had no virtue whatever, by teaching the ignorant and the credulous to despise every man and every measure that was respectable. Such were the efforts, generally speaking, of those who wrote for newspapers. He felt this so forcibly, that he confessed he never saw any man of a low condition with a newspaper in his hand, and who read any of it, without comparing him to a man who was swallowing poison under the hope of improving his health. He was not to be led away with any notions that might be entertained by some persons concerning the Liberty of the Press. Before any good could be done by the discussion of political subjects in newspapers, the capacity of the people ought to be enlarged. These were only a few of the objections which he felt to the publication of parliamentary proceedings in newspapers. It lessened the dignity of the House of Commons; it put the Members of it in a situation in which they ought not to stand; it fomented discontents throughout the nation; it multiplied nothing, or very rarely any thing, but that species of information which was destructive to every good principle, and was hostile to the character of every public man, or

individual in whom public trust was reposed. It produced also the inconvenience of which the honourable gentleman who made this motion, but for reasons he could not well understand, wished to withdraw it, complained; but that was its least evil. But as the House had now the opportunity, (which by the way had been well to have occurred sooner,) it ought not to be lost; the character of the House ought to be vindicated, and the advantage of the Public ought to be regarded. What course the House would take was not for him, but for others, to determine. He had no motion himself to make; he left every thing open to the House. He was desirous of delivering his sentiments on this subject, because the occasion which offered was not frequent, although the occasion which called for the animadversion and decision of the House was much too frequent; and this not because gentlemen did not know, but because they chuse to abandon their privileges. He had declared his opinion on this practice of newspaper reporting. The House would judge of what was right to be done. He did not wish to say any thing more, whether the House ought now to come to a decision of either confirming the old practice of prohibition, or of favouring the relaxation of very modern times. He had now no other duty to discharge to that House, except returning thanks for the indulgence with which he had been heard upon this occasion.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that he did not rise to interrupt what seemed to be the general disposition of the House for withdrawing the complaint now under consideration, but he wished to state distinctly his reasons for what he had said a few days ago respecting the misrepresentation of the speeches of Members. The object which he had in view was to remedy the evil which arose from the misrepresentation of what was said and done in Parliament, but he differed from the right honourable gentleman below him (the Secretary at War) upon the general argument respecting the publicity of the proceedings of the House. He was not against the practice in itself, provided a fair statement could be given, nor did he see that any such mischievous consequences as had been supposed could result from it. He could not think that there would be any change in the nature of the Government. Neither did he think that the spirit of a representative Constitution at all required that the people should never inquire into the conduct of their representative till the period for which he was chosen expired, and they were to proceed to a new election. It was the duty of electors to watch the conduct of their representative. The evils arising from misrepresentation of the proceedings of Parliament certainly were of a serious nature, but he did not think that, with all their malignancy,

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they had yet been productive of the mischief which they might occasion. There never was a period where the people of this country were more attached to their Constitution, or where the House of Commons was more justly held in honour. That in general all publication of the proceedings of the House was dangerous and improper, he would not say. Particular occasions there might be, where the delicacy and importance of a question might render it proper to withhold the allowance, which in ordinary cases might be granted. Admitting, then, the mischiefs of misrepresentations, he did not think that the practice itself was so dangerous or intolerable as the right honourable gentleman had contended. The House in conniving at the practice, ought to reserve its power of control, and exercise its sound discretion as to the occasions when it might relax in the rigour of its orders. So much he thought necessary to say, to correct any mistake that might arise from what he had said on a former night, as if he was decidedly against every species of publication of the speeches and proceedings in Parliament. There was another point on which he must say a few words. There were some reports which, though contradicted, were apt to be revived, and like ghosts to walk abroad, till at last it was very difficult to lay them. The other night, when the honourable gentleman made the present complaint, he said that the article must have been sent and paid for by some individual. The report of this debate in one of the papers made him (Mr. Wilberforce) take that imputation to himself without contradicting it; whereas, he never did understand or suppose that he was the person alluded to. He thought that the present, however, was not the moment to enter into a contest about the particular subjects of complaint which existed. He hoped that the manner in which the affair had been taken up, would operate as a warning in future to those concerned, and show that, whether in misrepresentation of speeches and proceedings in Parliament, in comments on the conduct of Members, and on the House at large, they were determined to vindicate their honour and their privileges; that they were not actuated by mere personal feelings, but influenced by a just regard for the dignity of the House, and for the preservation of the Constitution.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS expressed his satisfaction that the motion had been made, which was now before the House. But he was of opinion that it must undergo a little provisional step; that is, that the order should be discharged, with the leave of the House. The only regular way, he believed, in which it could be done, was, for the honourable Member to ask leave to withdraw the order. The motion he should certainly not oppose; and in-

deed when he had expressed a wish that the subject should be stopped on the night when it was first mentioned, it was, because he was decisively of opinion, not from any personal feeling with respect to himself, not from what he suffered, but he was decisively and conscientiously of opinion, that if a practice, which he should mention to the House, was allowed to continue, there would be an end almost to the dignity and utility of their proceedings. The particular species of libel to which he adverted was the practice of Members of the House becoming the libellers of the House. "This was a practice which (said the right honourable gentleman) cannot, and, give me leave to say, shall not, go on. If no one else will take it up, I pledge myself that I will, the first opportunity that is fairly afforded me, bring the offence before the House, by whom, in a regular manner, it can be tried; and if it shall be found to be a libel upon the House by one of its own Members, something must be done." He did not mean, he stated, to dwell upon particular cases; but he must refer the House to a celebrated club where honourable gentlemen thought proper, without doing it in the House, to go and libel the House. That was the practice of which he complained; a practice which could not be suffered to continue, and which, he repeated, should not continue. He did not apply that observation to the honourable gentleman; but there was about the end of the last session of Parliament a speech given in the papers, purporting to be the speech of the honourable gentleman who had now come forward with a complaint of misrepresentation. The speech to which he alluded began by congratulating the honourable gentleman's constituents that the House of Commons was about to adjourn. If the gentleman's congratulation had been, that the House was about to adjourn after a long and laborious session, he should not have had any reason to complain of it. But the honourable gentleman would perhaps recollect the words that immediately followed: he congratulated the constituents that the House was about to adjourn, "for he never heard of Parliament being summoned to meet for the dispatch of business, but he considered that it was to meet for the dispatch of him and his constituents." In other words, that the Parliament was never assembled but for the purpose of bringing grievances upon the country. Observing, therefore, the practice of libelling the House, he should have been hurt to death to have brought a poor printer to the bar for punishment, while he was conscious that he had slept for months, and not brought before the consideration of the House such a practice as that to which he had alluded. He therefore hoped that what he had said would be kept in Remembrance. The House, indeed,

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might rest assured, that if it did not protect itself from libels by its own members, it would not be able to protect itself from the attacks of other persons who were not its members. The representatives of the people possessed peculiar privileges; they were protected in their persons, they were allowed liberty of speech; but in return for the protection so given, for that liberty of speech so guarded, he hoped he was not drawing an unfair conclusion when he said that, in return for those privileges, they who possess them ought not to use them for the purpose of libelling and calumniating Parliament, but that they ought to hold it up to the people as the great safeguard and the bulwark of the country. He therefore repeated what he had before said, that if no other Member would take up the cause of the House of Commons, he would; and he should think that he was performing the greatest service that could be performed, because he was doing that which tended to preserve the dignity and credit of the House. He concluded by asking the honourable gentleman whether he meant to withdraw the complaint he had made?

Mr. TIERNEY replied, that he had no objection to withdraw the complaint; but he did not see how he could say that he had not made any complaint. He thought still that there was cause; but as he did not believe that the offence was wilfully committed, he should not press the complaint.

Mr. SPEAKER said that the honourable gentleman had on a former day made a complaint to the House: he did not now wish to persist in it, and if he expressed his readiness to withdraw it, it would be the same as when notice of a motion was given, which motion it was afterwards determined should not be persisted in.

After some conversation between Mr. Chancellor Pitt and Mr. Percival, Mr. Speaker stated the mode to be—"That the honourable gentleman having expressed a wish to withdraw his complaint, the House assented, and the order was discharged."

Mr. TIERNEY said, that he did not mean now to enter into the general discussion, but still he could not refrain from alluding to some language which a right honourable gentleman had used towards the conclusion of his speech, and to which he should be sorry not to give some answer: at the same time he must say, that the right honourable gentleman had taken care that no sufficient answer could be given to it. How he could reconcile it to himself to have kept such a charge as he had made six months in his pocket, he must best be able to tell. But he seemed to come under a description of men who wish to keep something by them against a time when they may be attacked themselves, who are prepared with *siet-offs*, and who are

more anxious for themselves, than for the honour and dignity of the House. But it must be obvious to every gentleman, that it was impossible for him either to admit or deny the charge, till he knew the context. If the right honourable gentleman had made the accusation at the time when the speech was stated to have been spoken, or had suggested it to the learned gentleman who sat near him, he should have known what to have done. But it was not quite accurate to bring the charge now six months after the occurrence was supposed to have taken place, and after Parliament had been sitting two months. All he could say generally was, that for whatever speeches he might have made to his constituents, he knew at the time he spoke them, and he felt now, that he was answerable. The same assertion he was sure he might make for an honourable gentleman, of whom, though he had not seen him for some time, he should never speak without the highest respect, and for whom he felt the warmest friendship. For that honourable gentleman he could say as much, and he was sure that whatever he had said he would be ready to answer for. But it was really placing gentlemen in a hard situation, to throw out accusations against them for words used six months back, and those words taken upon the report of a newspaper. If the right honourable gentleman had confined himself generally to the mischiefs of misrepresentation of the debates of the House, no man would be more ready to join him than he should; but he could not agree in the idea, that there ought to be no representations of what passed in the House at all. He was sure it would be seen that the right honourable gentleman had availed himself of an opportunity of bringing forward a charge which he could not now answer; but if that gentleman would institute any proceedings which he might think fit with respect to any thing that he might have said, he should thank him for it.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that he introduced what he said as the foundation of the opinion which he should give. What he stated was, that he was glad the motion had been made, because he should be sorry to punish such men after the opportunity of noticing so much greater offences had been let go. In ordinary cases, persons were answerable for what they did; but he contended, that the law was not adequate to the particular practice he had alluded to. Let common libellers be left to the law of the land; but some measures were necessary to be taken, and some powers should be vested in the House, to punish such of its Members as might be guilty of libelling the House.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL declared, that he had a considerable degree of feeling upon the subject; a feeling arising from

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the difficulty of ascertaining what ought to be done with reference to the scandalous libels that were published upon the House. The learned gentleman proceeded to notice a paper of the 22d of June last, which contained the report of a speech stated to have been spoken by the honourable gentleman; but which he would fairly say he did not think he had spoken. If the House of Commons, he said, knowing what had past, would not vindicate their own honour and character, willing as he was to do it, they would remember that, whatever he might do, he should be placed in the situation of making an experiment; it would be said to him, that the House felt nothing about what he was complaining; that he was the only Member who had made the complaint; and that no other Member had thought fit to do it. He, therefore, would say, distinctly and fairly, that he hoped the duties of the office which he possessed would be entrusted to other hands than to his own, if every branch of the Magistracy in the country did not join with him in putting an end to that system which had been at work for four years to destroy the Constitution, and to do it by means of degrading the House. Why did he state this? Could it be a source of satisfaction to him to press individuals with prosecutions, if he were not satisfied that his public duty required him to do so? Could it be a source of comfort to him, that many men, who wished well to him, should complain of the tardiness and inactivity of the Attorney General in prosecuting, when they themselves were reading the most scandalous libels on the House, and yet not an individual stepped forward to punish them? He went into Courts of Justice, and though he could not regularly allude to what had been said to Juries, he found the first obstacle to prosecution was, what do you mean by hunting down these persons? He would venture therefore to say, that if one out of a hundred failed, it was upon this ground, that the twelve men who were bound to say what was the character of the paper brought before them, recollected that not one of the 558 Members of whom the House of Commons was composed had ever complained of the libel in question. He stated this, because he felt it as a personal hardship upon himself. Why, then, he wished gentlemen to consider a little, and to say, what ought to be done in prosecutions with reference to what were libels upon the House. He had already stated what he must consider to be an infamous libel upon the honourable gentleman, because he would not believe that any man, who had spoken such words, could come forward with any complaint; but if the House chose to say that their Members, instead of doing their duty in the

House, should go to alehouses in Covent garden, and state what the newspapers had represented them to state, he would say, fairly and distinctly, that no man serving His Majesty as Attorney General could serve him with effect, if the House endured the publication of such speeches as the speeches of their own Members. Such proceedings it was incumbent upon the House to repress; for if they tolerated them, it must not be imputed as blame to him that he was unable to repress them in subordinate situations. It was with reference to the motion which had been made that he stated these things. He knew he had been blamed for prosecuting too much; that charge, however, he bore without the least uneasiness, because he had prosecuted no man until he had exercised a severe and patient judgement before he did prosecute. But with respect to those who blamed him for not prosecuting enough, he had to say to them, that it was their fault, and not his, that he had not prosecuted more. Having stated this, he had to say for one, that he felt infinite satisfaction in hearing that the right honourable gentleman had determined to take into consideration what ought to be done with reference to these publications; and he felt the more satisfaction, because it was not for the honour and justice of the House, that other persons would be prosecuted for libels, if the House would not notice the libels upon it by its own Members. In the determination which the right honourable gentleman had made, he would follow him to the utmost; and he would conclude what he had to say by observing, that if the House would take care of the conduct of its Members, the subjects of this country, who had found out that the principles which the measures of the House had repressed tended only to destroy the happiness of all nations—the subjects of this country, he believed, if the House would put an end to the proceedings he had alluded to, would be most thankful for it, and would heartily co-operate with them in producing the wished-for effect.

Mr. TIERNEY wished gentlemen to recollect that he never had complained of this statement as a libel. He complained of it as a mutilated statement, the insertion of which he verily believed had been paid for. This had nothing to do with the political conduct of this or that gentleman. What he stated expressly was, that it might tend to embroil individuals. He would, however, withdraw the complaint, but with one more protest,—that it was not with any idea of compromise whatever. He withdrew the complaint, from a conviction that the offence, with respect to the printer of the paper alluded to, was not intentional.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that if he could conceive that any thing he had said gave an idea of a compromise, he begged leave to disclaim in the most pointed manner any such statement.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL affirmed that he must enter his protest against the opinion expressed by the honourable gentleman, that the insertion of the statement had been paid for. For such an insinuation no ground had been stated. Another thing likewise he wished to protest against was, that there was any compromise; that this was a misrepresentation. He had read it, and he would assert it to be a fairer representation than had been given in any other paper, and particularly in the paper alluded to in the statement.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that the learned gentleman seemed almost to put it out of his power to withdraw the complaint. He had grounds which satisfied his mind, that it was not the report of the persons who reported regularly for *The Times*. He could assure the learned gentleman also, upon his honour, that he had grounds, which led him to suspect that the insertion of the account was paid for.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL remarked, that the House would recollect, that an honourable Member had said, it had been attributed to him. The honourable gentleman opposite him had not denied, that he meant it to be attributed to his honourable friend. If, he said, that he did not mean to attribute it to him, in that case, he had not a word more to say.

Mr. TIERNEY replied, that the learned gentleman would have done better to have asked the question first. For his own part, he was sure that the honourable Member knew he did not mean to attribute it to him, and therefore had never asked him the question.

Mr. W. SMITH called the attention of the House to another matter. What had been alluded to hitherto had been a misrepresentation of the proceedings of the House. What he meant, however, to allude to now was, a circumstance which the House would consider as an aggravation of a breach of privilege, or, at least, as malicious—he meant the arraignment of the conduct of gentlemen. Every Member knew that it was disorderly, even in the House, to attribute particular motives to gentlemen—far more disorderly to attribute base or bad motives. It so happened, that a paragraph appeared in a daily paper, imputing to him no other motives than selfish ones for his opposition to the bill which was now passing through the House. Two or three days after it appeared, a tax-gatherer, for whom he sent, called upon him. He was speaking to him of the inconveniences that might arise from the exaggerations of

gentlemen's fortunes. The tax-gatherer had said, that perhaps he was not aware of what had been inserted with respect to himself. Though he meant to make no complaint, yet he wished to state a few things, from a regard to what was due to his own character. The paragraph was as follows :

" Mr. William Smith, who spoke at such length, and with such *elegant eloquence*, in the House of Commons, is pretty well known to possess a fortune of, at least, fifteen thousand pounds per annum, acquired by commerce."

This exaggerated statement of his fortune he conceived to be infamous, because he was one of those who believed that particular duties were attached to large fortunes, and because, if a man had a larger fortune than he was thought to possess, the world would be induced to think that he was deficient in discharging those duties which he ought to perform. The paragraph then went on :

" The assessed taxes of this gentleman do not exceed three hundred pounds per annum ; a stronger instance need not be named in proof that expenditure is not the criterion of income ; and that the mode (to which Mr. Smith so strongly objects) in the new bill is the fairest and most equal plan to obtain the sum required for the defence of the country."

He thought it his duty to state thus publicly, that every word asserted in the paragraph was a direct falsehood, and a malicious one, as would appear from the insinuation that followed. The writer of the paragraph, in the first place, chose to assert a direct falsehood with respect to his fortune, the amount of which he could not know ; and next, a falsehood with respect to the amount of his tax, which he might have known. The paragraph concluded as follows :

" Mr. Smith is one of the most violent of the seceders : his coming to the House on Friday, and exerting himself so strongly in opposition to the bill, is of course to be attributed *solely* to a sense of public duty."

The inuendo, Mr. Smith said, was, that he did attend solely from a sense of private interest. The whole of the paragraph he treated with too much contempt to make a formal complaint of ; but still he thought it was a duty which he owed to himself publicly to contradict it. With respect to misrepresentations of what he had said with respect to this bill, he had seen some ; but as he considered them to be slips from haste, he had not thought proper to notice them. This, paragraph, however, he did not consider in that light ; he viewed it as gross a breach of privilege, as if words

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had been put into his mouth directly contrary to what he had spoken.

The complaint was then withdrawn, and

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the third reading of the Income Bill.

Mr. NICHOLS rose to oppose the measure, as introducing a new mode of taxation. One of the arguments which had been urged as a defence of this measure was, that the people of this country had been accustomed to taxes upon income, and the land tax had been mentioned as an instance of a tax upon income. There was, however, this material difference between the tax in question and the land tax; that the latter was a tax upon visible income, whereas the former was upon supposed income. But there was another material difference between these two taxes. In laying on the land tax, great care was taken that the subject should not be brought into contest with the Government. The sum to be raised was laid upon the country generally, and then it was subdivided among the different districts. When any dispute arose, the individual had his fellow-subject and not Government to contend with.

This was a wise provision of our ancestors, because they knew that such contests were not consistent with civil liberty. It appeared to him, that the Tribunal which was to decide upon disputed questions, was one that must be devoted to Government. It was absurd to suppose that country gentlemen could be converted into executors of revenue; they could not, unless they laid aside their liberality and their friendship. But it appeared to him of very little consequence how the Tribunal was now constituted, because they had granted one tenth of their income, they must agree to the means of raising it; the Minister would come another year and say, "My mechanism is not complete; you must give me the means of carrying the principle to which you have agreed into execution." This would be a fair demand on the part of the Minister, and he did not see how they could refuse it.

This measure not only exposed individuals to a contest with Government, which, he contended, should always be avoided, but it harassed and subdued him before he entered into that contest: it made him expose his vulnerable parts by disclosing his situation. The people had a right to examine into the conduct of Government; but he wished to know how they could exercise that right when every individual was at the mercy of Government? What was the object of this bill? It had been termed a salvage, which the people were to pay for the protection of the remainder of their property. It seemed to him to have been resorted to merely to

avoid the inconvenience of a loan. He had no hesitation in saying, he thought a loan would be the better way of raising the money; if it were *Res Integra*, he should, perhaps, be of a different opinion. The funds were now higher than when some of the former loans were made. With respect to the sinking fund, he said it was calculated to increase the public debt, which had, in fact, been doubled since it was established. The right honourable gentleman did not seem to consider the difference between the Commissioners of the land tax and the Commissioners under this bill; in the one case they acted in a friendly way between the parties who might happen to dispute; in the other, they were the extortioners of the taxes, and this was an employment which country gentlemen could not condescend to. The Minister had brought in this bill with a great deal of art—it appeared to spare the lower and higher orders of people; but with respect to the former, though in the first instance they were exempted, yet they would ultimately feel it. But the higher orders were really spared; he saw no reason why a man of 100*l.* did not pay equal to a man of 200*l.* a year, a sum of 200*l.* should pay in the same proportion with a man of 20,000*l.* a year. The right honourable gentleman had said, that his bill would not compel a disclosure.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the honourable gentleman was not regular in considering this bill as the measure of the Minister, it was the measure of the House.

Mr. NICHOLS continued: he said the bill would certainly enforce a disclosure, and he did not think any reliance was to be placed upon the promise of secrecy. He considered this bill as a deep wound upon the Constitution, and upon that ground should give his vote against it.

On the question being again put for the third reading of the bill,

Mr. ABBOTT rose to declare his perfect approbation of the measure, in which opinion of it he said he was happy in not standing alone, as a very great majority of the people of the country had manifested their public spirit, and the just sense they entertained of the cause they were embarked in, by highly approving of the principle of the bill, and acknowledging the sound policy of raising a considerable part of the supplies within the year. Among those persons who stood foremost in the support of the measure, were to be reckoned a description of persons, who, from their habits and occupations in life, should be supposed to be the most conversant in the financial concerns of the country—he meant the leading mercantile and monied men in the metropolis. These had not only

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assented to the measure, but declared their opinions, that income was one of the most proper objects of taxation—and on the general principle that all income should be rated as it was found, without a reference to particular cases—and, indeed, it was on this principle that all modes of direct taxation whatsoever operated. As a striking instance of this, let gentlemen consider the principle of the Poor's Laws, they operated precisely as the bill in question professed to do; and the principle of the Poor's Laws was never yet called in question. One of the prominent features of the measure was the increasing scale from a low beginning up to a certain amount, by which it was to affect income; and by the peculiar mode laid down, the poorer classes in society were wholly exempted. To the principles of the bill, several precedents in the history of the country clearly applied, exclusive of that generally adopted throughout the Poor's Laws; for instance, the Poll Tax in the reign of King William, the principle was directly the same, though not the mode of operation, as in the latter; the tax increased not in proportion to the incomes of individuals, but to the scale of rank. This last principle, however, being latterly abrogated in the country, and for solid reasons, for nothing, in his mind, tended so much to the well being of a State, as a proper distinction of rank, which a principle of taxing in a proportion, increased according to the elevation of rank, would tend too much to level and confound; and no part of society, he observed, was so much benefited by a gradation in rank and an inequality of property as the very poorer orders, as it was by persons of extensive properties or exalted rank that they were chiefly employed.

Another peculiar feature and leading excellence in the bill was, its being more comprehensive in its operation than former plans of taxation on a similar principle, and less liable to objection than these in any of its details. It afforded the best species of relief against the possible oppression of any of those who might act under its authority, and every possible regard was paid to the feelings of individuals. Besides, the mode of collection prescribed by it was economical beyond any former example. The provisions in the bill, which went to implicate the property of absentees, were deserving of much commendation, and calculated to render a species of property serviceable to the State, which hitherto had not contributed its due share. Indeed, this principle (we understood the honourable gentleman to say) was not carried far enough; he saw no reason why the property of foreigners resident abroad should not be taxed; and why such persons should be exempted from paying their quota to the support of that State in which their properties were assigned

protection, to a degree far beyond what any other country in the world could afford; much, he observed, had been said of the unconstitutionality of this measure; and this idea was grounded by gentlemen who advanced it in three parts of the bill, which might lead to a disclosure of property. To assert that any measure was unconstitutional, created a degree of popular anxiety, and the attention of the Public was directed to the warmest supporters and opposers of such measures; but it was easy to assert, that any particular measure was unconstitutional. It were not so easy, however, to state any specific grounds for such assertions. Could a specific standard be erected, whereby it could be judged what measures were constitutional and what were not? A measure might be called unconstitutional which gave new powers to the Crown wherewith to oppress the subject; but were any such afforded by the present measure? Certainly not! Rather the contrary. In former plans of taxation, the Commissioners for levying such taxes were appointed by the Crown. In the present instance they were in certain cases, to a degree, at least, appointed by Parliament; and where they were not, the appointment rested in the Grand Juries, a quarter which could not give any just grounds for popular alarm. There were several modifications made by the House in the powers to be granted to the Commissioners under this bill; all which tended to render the measure more beneficial to the subject. No person was compelled by the bill to an involuntary statement of his income upon oath—neither was any individual to be refused a hearing upon his oath. The appellent jurisdiction granted by the bill, was also the theme of much reprehension; but for this he saw no just grounds. The principle pervaded the general system of our jurisprudence, and he saw no reason why the power of appeal should not be equally extended; were interests, where the public safety was involved, to be less considered than those of individuals? If not, then the regulation was perfectly right—such a provision was necessary in numberless points of view; for while men were men, perpetual grounds of complaint would arise. However, no new power was afforded to the Crown by any of the provisions of the bill. With respect to these parts of the bill which might lead to a disclosure, he regarded them in a very different light from gentlemen at the other side; the unnecessary cry raised against them was founded in prejudice, and might be attended with mischievous effects; at the same time he was aware of the considerations deeply rooted in the minds of commercial men on those points; these, certainly, ought to be regarded with tenderness, and every proper precaution was wisely taken on that head. With respect to disclosure in general, every

proper degree of care was taken. An oath of secrecy was required from those persons who were to administer that part of the bill; and what more solemn obligation could be imposed? Beside, this principle of disclosure was by no means anomalous to the British law. Were gentlemen aware of the widely-extended system of disclosure which prevailed in Scotland for more than two centuries past, and in Ireland for, at least, one century, where every description of landed property was registered, with all its various circumstances, and open to the inspection of every individual? To come nearer—Was it not known that the like system prevailed in the two richest and most populous counties in England, Yorkshire and Middlesex, where mortgages, and the various incumbrances upon landed property, were registered, and which any man might see every day? Did not this principle of disclosure prevail generally in the West Indies, and throughout the United States of America? Why then was such a limited contingent and eventual exposition of property, as was ordained by the bill, so loudly complained of? He certainly was not partial to a Republican form of Government, but one of the prevailing traits of that system was, a jealousy of the Executive Power in the least degree interposing in the concerns of private individuals. Notwithstanding this, the Americans thought proper, after two years deliberation, to establish a general registry of property throughout their entire states. It was partially adopted in England in the present day, and had formerly more generally obtained in England; and he saw no reason why the practice of our ancestors, and of neighbouring countries, should be cavilled at in the present instance. With respect to commercial concerns, a degree of delicacy should obtain; and in this view the trading and manufacturing interests were entitled to some favour. However, in Ireland, by act of Parliament, persons of those descriptions were not exempt from registering their securities. It was the custom of persons in the most ordinary concerns to look to the right and left for the best securities, and to cause every possible disclosure to be made. Why then, he would again ask, should such violent objections be made to disclosure in the present instance, and in a case where every possible guard and shield was made use of against its being injurious to individuals? Upon a general view of the measure, he said, he was rejoiced, and congratulated the country upon the arrival of the period, at which a measure so replete with benefit to the public, was proposed to Parliament; it was calculated to produce the happiest effects, and to involve a progressive degree of financial benefit, similar to the operations of a sinking fund, which acts in an accelerated *ratio*; it would prevent the increase of per-

manent taxation, and in that way aid the operations of the plan which was laid down to counteract, beyond a certain amount, the extension of the public debt. The mode of carrying the measure into effect would necessarily be improved on experiment. As a war tax he regarded the measure in the most favourable point of view; and its domestic effects must tend to increase the national energy, in bringing the war to a speedy and honourable conclusion.

Mr. TIERNEY observed, that he agreed with an honourable gentleman who had spoken early in the debate, (Mr. Nichols), that the measure of raising the supplies within the year was desirable, as an abstract principle, inasmuch as it would tend to prevent the people from being easily led into expensive wars; the question however at present, he considered to be a very different one—It was merely whether the bill presented the best mode of raising part of the supplies within the year or not? He had no hesitation in deciding in the negative. He should prefer the funding system; and thought it his duty to protest against the present measure. He was aware of the effect a loan must have on the funds; but he did not regard that as a serious objection—He knew that the national credit could be affected but very slightly by artificial means. Nothing could materially raise it but public confidence, and increasing prosperity; but the mischiefs to be apprehended by a depreciation of the funds of 6 or 7 per cent. could not be put into competition with the evils to be dreaded from a measure so pregnant with mischief as that under discussion: that material consideration was not now the present question, but whether or not the mode proposed was the best possible practicable one of raising part of the supplies within the year.

With respect to the honourable gentleman's idea that the mode of taxation in question did not proceed upon a new principle; he would contend the principle, strictly speaking, was new. He believed no precedent could be found, where men were compellable to state upon oath what they were able to pay. Something like it, however, had occurred during the Administration of Cardinal Wolsey; but the measure was regarded by historians as a violent stretch of arbitrary power. With regard to the Poll Tax, the similitude did not hold good; in that case a person had a certain given sum to pay, and no more—the account was arbitrarily levied, but then the sum was clearly defined, and no disclosure was necessary. Speaking of disclosure, he said, he knew an instance in the affair of the assessed taxes last year, where a man paid upwards of 200l. more than perhaps he would be obliged, sooner than swear to his income—and he apprehended that many cases of the kind would

arise under the proposed measure. He quoted Lord Coke's sentiments upon new-invented modes of taxation, or, in the language of that venerable lawyer, "New inventions of Subsidies." However, it appeared that these new modes of taxation gave rise to four rebellions in the country, and in one of those the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the First Lord of the Treasury, were destroyed. The attempt to extort revenue by a disclosure of property upon oath was never made but by Wolsey. In the preceding reign, that of Henry VIIIth, a measure not dissimilar was resorted to. It was commonly called "Lord Chancellor Morton's dilemma." The direction given for the levying of the tax generally ran to this effect—if a man lives on a saving plan, you are to consider him as possessed of property in consequence of his economy. If he lives extravagantly—why then that is certainly a proof of his having something—[*Much laughing*] a considerable degree of difficulty would arise in estimating with accuracy the income of those called misers. He would suppose there were 3,000 of these in the kingdom; it would be almost impossible to satisfy the surveyor of the income of these persons on account of their reputation for wealth. Another difficulty would arise, derivable from the plan of last year, many cases obtained where a man of not more than 2,000*l.* per ann. paid between 4 and 500*l.* assessed taxes; this would afford a plausible reason to the Commissioners for considering such person's annual income to be considerably greater. It might be alledged against him, that he would not have paid so much if he could not afford it, when it was in his power to have paid less; these were but a few among the serious and weighty objections which applied to the bill. He was convinced that a less objectionable mode could easily be found. It was little to say in favour of the measure, that precedents could be found for it, and the worst of times resorted to as the periods; but he averred that no direct precedent could be found for the disclosure of income upon oath. There was a particular mode of levying money, which obtained in the early part of our history, and which mode he would recommend to the consideration of the Mansion-house Committee, a set of gentlemen, who were so forward in recommending the present plan. The mode he alluded to was called the *Jews' Ransom*; it was that a *Tooth* was drawn every day from certain persons of that persuasion, until they paid the tax imposed upon them. One Jew at Bristol, was so obstinate as to have six or seven teeth drawn before he paid; at last his resolution failed, and the required sum was paid by him. This process, he rather imagined, would ill agree with some gentle-

men of the Mansion-house Committee—they would feel the effects of it, perhaps with peculiar severity.

With regard to the question of a general tax upon income, he seriously objected to it, and on the ground chiefly that all income was not disposable property. The principle that every man should contribute according to his means, he approved; but income was a very inadequate criterion of those. The difference between incomes was too obvious to need contending for. A person possessing permanent and independent income might spend what portion of it he chose, without injury to his heirs; but that resulting from personal industry, or from professions, was very different; it was necessary a part of the incomes of these descriptions should be laid by to guard against the evil day, as a provision for old age, and to obviate the consequence of personal accidents or infirmity. It was on this broad and obvious principle that he objected to a general tax upon income.

It was said, that persons embarked in trade should be favourably considered, and yet, perhaps more than any other, such persons could best reimburse themselves. The necessities of life must be had. What could restrain an advance in price upon those, to a degree by which the dealer could repay himself? By such practices the dealer would pay his tythe of income out of the remaining 9 10ths of the consumer—such would precisely be the effect. It was repeatedly said, that a gentleman should not clamorously object against a tax, unless he was provided with a better to substitute in its room. If this principle were pushed to the full extent, very little objection could be made to the majority of schemes. However he thought that any gentleman might properly suggest an idea or throw out a hint on those points. In this view he would say, that the plan of last year of increasing the assessed taxes, might be a better expedient than the present. That measure had hardly a fair trial. It might be very possible to improve upon the plan, so as to make it produce the expected sum; then why not try it, modified and improved, for another year? He never despaired of the resources of the country—It still possessed abundance. The deficiency to which the assessed taxes might be liable, below the ten millions required, in the present year, could, he thought, be easily provided—A tax upon certain commodities might be levied, particularly upon sugar, from which a large revenue might be derived, and with the additional advantage (now that we generally supplied the Continent with the article) of drawing it from the purses of other nations; there were also a variety of articles of luxury which might properly be taxed—

In short, many modes might be resorted to, free from the great and crying objections to which a general tax upon income was liable.

It was not only to the general principle of the measure that he was opposed, several of the provisions of the bill were equally objectionable—the mode of collecting was one of its worst features. The particular direction with which the merchants of a particular place were treated was objectionable. Should not Ministers endeavour to put those of other parts of the kingdom upon the same footing? The case of gentlemen of landed properties was, in many instances, peculiarly hard. Let their situations with respect to mortgages be considered, and the various evils which might beset them therefrom, in the event of a disclosure. Many gentlemen of that description, in consequence of youthful errors and extravagancies, were deeply involved, the effects of a disclosure on such persons were obvious. On the spur of the moment, all their creditors might come upon them. To all this it might be objected, that a general disclosure was only necessary, and not a detailed exposition—but even against disclosure of any kind, high prejudices obtained, and he would say, that popular prejudices should be respected where they were not injurious to the community—and at any rate, another mode should be tried to render disclosure unnecessary—that consideration alone he thought should delay the progress of the bill; and even the feelings of a large class of men should not be hurt in consequence of a hurry in carrying the bill through the House. He requested the right honourable gentleman to turn his attention to a less objectionable mode of proceeding with respect to that description of gentlemen.

When he considered how persons in trade were favoured beyond gentlemen of landed property, his anxiety was the greater: their disclosures were to be chiefly made to persons who might be said to be elected by themselves, and who, of course, must be supposed to possess a kind of fellow feeling with them. Yet even these persons who were to decide on the cases of men in trade, would be found to lie under some difficulties. Some of them, for instance, (Bank Directors,) would have a double duty: they were to investigate the affairs of certain commercial persons, in the one case, and immediately after might be called upon to advise with their brother Directors as to the propriety of discounting such persons' bills; they might have a derangement of the circumstances of an individual to witness, and almost at the same moment to pronounce in another quarter, whether or not it was proper to lend money to such a

person. He wished gentlemen to consider of a case which was more than possible.

Another serious objection which struck against certain provisions of the bill was, the liability of individuals to charges of perjury, and the trials for that offence. It was said, that innocence would be a sufficient guard against these: this he doubted—and would suppose the case, that in the first giving in of the schedule, a militia qualification of 100*l.* a year, or any amount, should appear therein, as part of a gentleman's real income, this might be done inadvertently; no wilful deception could be intended, and yet such might literally subject the person to the charge of perjury. What must be the feelings of an innocent man on such an occasion?—So far the bill operated to the production of revenue by the dread of corporeal punishment; he would again put the case to the consideration of the right honourable gentleman, hoping he would turn in his mind, and endeavour to find a more lenient mode. He had no doubt but the right honourable gentleman thought that now proposed, the best possible one at the time he adopted it. In that view he would give him full credit for honesty of intention!

He also disapproved of the measure, keeping still in view the mode of collecting the tax; not only for the power it would throw into the hands of the Crown, by empowering its officers to pry into the secret affairs of individuals, but on account of the very great number of spies it must necessarily encourage, for the purpose of affording information to the Commissioners, &c. of the affairs of individuals, and which, in many cases, could be done only through the medium of clerks, confidential servants, and such persons. A certain gratuity was bestowable, he understood, on the surveyors, in certain cases, on the recommendation of the Commissioners, by the Treasury. He asked, whether there was a restriction on the Treasury from bestowing such gratuity without the recommendation of the Commissioners?—He then proceeded to detail a variety of objections against those parts of the bill, and expressed his fears that one of the worst effects of the measure would be, that it would destroy British feelings, and render their country less dear to Englishmen, by abridging their comforts in it. The numberless emigrations which must ensue from a continuance of such a system, and which eventually must inspire the enemy with fresh hopes. It would diffuse, he said, mutual distrust among individuals in every class of society, and tend to destroy the peculiar affection which Britons hitherto always possessed for their native country.

Mr. PATTEN expressed his decided approbation of the measure. It arose, he said, from the unanimous sentiment of all public-

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spirited men, and their wish to prosecute, to an honourable conclusion, a just and necessary war, originating in the aggressions of an inveterate enemy. It was no convulsive effort of expiring finance to carry on the war for another year; but the genuine tribute of a patriotic people in support of a Constitution, and an order of things, under which they possessed such inestimable advantages. It arose from the quick sense of British feeling at seeing the national honour insulted; and it exhibited such a manifestation of public spirit throughout the nation, which must chill the hopes of an inveterate enemy. To a certain degree, however, he agreed with an honourable gentleman, in saying, that persons of landed property were placed in a rather hard situation, and the circumstances he thought worthy of the consideration of the House. But he might scout the idea of another honourable gentleman, who said, that the Commissioners, previous to their election, must be persons devoted to the interests of Government. The jealousy of the House would have guarded against that, even were provisions proposed which could lead to such a supposition.

Mr. NICHOLS spoke in explanation.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the general principle of the measure had been so frequently and fully debated, and had been so ably and eloquently stated by his learned friend who had just sat down, that he felt it perfectly unnecessary to say any thing to that point. But what he wished to notice was simply this: The honourable gentleman, in language very flattering to him, had made a statement which was not quite so flattering. He had stated, that it remained only with him to find means which should prevent the necessity of a disclosure, and he attributed a hardness of heart to him that he would not take that trouble. If he, however, had that apathy in him, he could not have overlooked that point, for his attention had been called to it by frequent discussion. If he did not, therefore, attempt to find any mode, it was not because he had not attended to the thing, but because the arguments he then used had satisfied the House that it was not fit nor right to be done. He did state a mode for commercial men which had been adopted by the House. There were details which required the minutest accuracy. It was, in some degree, necessary to appoint Commissioners capable of investigating such minutiae. But that could best be extended to the case of local Commissioners, so far as to the practicability; but besides that, he stated as an argument, upon which he strongly relied, that reasons there did not operate against publicity; and he thought it was important that all the world should know, that the rich paid the tax, and that there was no evasion: therefore, both

on the grounds of its impracticability, and still more of its impropriety, he was against it.

Sir JAMES PULTENEY thought it very desirable that the clause respecting disclosure in commercial men might with great ease be extended to the case of landed gentlemen. He thought it was extremely hard upon them that they should be put in a worse situation than commercial men; he thought it was making an invidious distinction. Whatever might be said of the unwillingness of men to disclose their income, it was a deep-rooted prejudice, and ought to be treated with respect, especially as we were now engaged in a dreadful conflict to support what many people called prejudices.

Sir W. YOUNG spoke in favour of the West-India merchants, and said, he was sure that they would not have objected to a disclosure, if it had been required of them.

Mr. PERCIVAL said, he should not say any thing to the general principle which had been universally approved of, but he could not refrain from one or two observations upon what had fallen from others. The honourable Baronet had been a supporter of the bill, and therefore his objections deserved respect. He seemed to be very averse to any disclosure; but surely the very defect of the measure of last year was a want of publicity, and therefore it became necessary to resort to the present one. He felt regret, that from any circumstances it should become necessary to shelter any class of men; but where the same arguments did not apply, it could not be necessary to extend the indulgence. He felt that great advantages could result from publicity; it would shew that there were no evasions, but that every man paid his due share. An honourable gentleman had regarded the manner in which this measure might affect the enemy; he did not agree with him; he thought it would have a considerable effect in our favour with the enemy. It was well known that they built their greatest hopes in being able to destroy our funded system; and this measure would shew them that we were able to go on without adding to our permanent debt. Even admitting that the measure trenched upon our private comforts, what must the enemy think of us, when they saw the bill unanimously adopted by the country, with the exception of five or six gentlemen in that House, and, perhaps, as many out of doors? There was one circumstance of novelty in the argument of to-night, which he could not pass over unnoticed, which was, the recommendation of a farther trial of the Assessed Taxes, with some amendments; but he could not help recollecting, that the same arguments and the same warmth were urged against the

act of last year, as were now used against the present bill. In the course of the next year, perhaps, this measure might become the favourite.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH said, if his honourable friend opposed the Assessed Taxes last year, there was no inconsistency in his preferring them to the present measure, because the inconveniences which they induced, though great, might be less. The bill, he admitted, was much improved by the modifications, but still the radical defect of inequality remained; for this reason, therefore, he must persevere in his opposition to it. Mr. Smith then repeated several of his former arguments, and concluded with observing, that the present measure would throw more influence into the hands of the Executive Power, than any for a long time resorted to.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL adverted to the hopes of the enemy to ruin us by the destruction of our funding system. He argued from thence the necessity of raising the supplies within the year, as the most effectual means of banishing such hopes, and proved, by its comparison with every other species, that the present mode was the least objectionable.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL said, that an equal tax on income was universally approved of last session, when the Assessed Taxes were under consideration. That expenditure had proved an unfair criterion, and that we had now resorted to income itself, and therefore were in no danger of being misled by the fallacy of the rule which governed the act of last session.

Mr. ELLIOTT spoke on the same side.

Mr. TYRWHITT made a neat and sensible speech in support of the bill.

The House divided on the third reading of the bill—Ayes, 93; Noes, 2.

A number of new clauses and amendments were gone through, and read a third time, when

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that as there were more clauses to be considered, and some amendments in the body of the bill, which were not likely to occupy much of the time of the House; and as the night was then far advanced, it might be better to postpone them till to-morrow, when he wished the House would meet at three o'clock precisely, to proceed farther in the third reading of the clauses and amendments. He hoped the bill might then be passed in time to go up to the Lords the same day.

Mr. SPEAKER put the question upon adjourning the farther consideration of the bill.

Sir G. P. TURNER wished the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider of some abatements to ladies with small incomes, such as widows living on small annuities, &c.

Mr. W. SMITH suggested the propriety of including the masters of schools and academies, in the deductions to be allowed to shopkeepers and retail dealers. To this Mr. Chancellor Pitt seemed to assent.

Sir James Pulteney was going to propose some verbal amendments in the body of the bill, when Mr. Speaker said, that this was not the proper time; since, if any such were now made, they would, by the rules of the House, exclude other amendments from the preceding parts of the bill.

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY wished to know, whether the officers of the Exchequer were to forego their fees on the money arising from this bill. Such a measure had been talked of on the Triple-assessment Bill. He also wished to know who were to assess the inspectors and surveyors? The bill made no provision in this respect.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, there was no particular reason for the officers of the Exchequer surrendering their fees on the money arising from this bill, more than if it arose in any other way. Their fees were not on the receipt, but on the issue of the money; and it would make no difference to them, whether the sum of ten millions were raised by this bill, or by a loan. With respect to the assessment of surveyors and inspectors, that was certainly a fit matter of consideration, though they would probably be persons of so small income as to render it a subject of no great importance. Perhaps the best way would be, to order their assessments to be made by the Commissioners.

Mr. TIERNEY thought what had fallen from Sir W. Pulteney had not been rightly understood. Under the Triple-assessment Bill, a provision was made to receive voluntary contributions, and certain persons, particularly gentlemen in office, had engaged to pay a fifth of their income. He wished to know, whether these regulations were still to exist in respect to this bill?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that all the Triple-assessment Bill would still exist, and be in full force, except only such parts as were repealed by the present measure, of which the raising the triple assessment was the principal. Gentlemen might therefore make voluntary contributions as formerly, and those in office might give just as much as they pleased, above the ten per cent. exacted by the bill. But he did not conceive they were bound to pay a fifth now, as they had done formerly. Their excess of payment under the

other bill was made in consequence of the emergency of the case, and to supply the deficiencies that, upon a calculation, might arise by evasions or otherwise of the sum expected to be raised. The same circumstances did not now exist; and it would be unreasonable to suppose, that because some gentlemen had paid a fifth when others paid none at all, they should therefore continue the same payments when an equal to ten per cent. was levied. Still, however, they were at liberty on this point to follow their own inclinations.

The question of adjournment passed.

Mr. SPEAKER gave notice, that he should take the chair precisely at three o'clock on the following day, when he hoped there would be a sufficient attendance to enable him to proceed to business.

Tuesday, January 1, 1799.

On petition for the enclosure of some open land,

Sir W. DOLBEN took occasion to observe, that the growth of timber was an object of great national importance as it regarded the navy. He was sorry to observe, that timber was not planted in the grounds which had been enclosed of late years by the authority of Parliament, and that, in that particular, the public interest had been neglected. He wished to see an order made in the House, that when fifty acres and upwards should be allowed to be inclosed by Parliament, a proportionable quantity of such land should be allotted for the growth of timber for the navy.

Honourable Mr. PIERREPOINT approved highly of the sentiments just uttered by the honourable Baronet, and hoped to see them adopted by the House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day, to take into farther consideration the Income Bill.

A number of verbal amendments were proposed by Mr. Chancellor PITT, and adopted by the House.

Sir G. P. TURNER proposed an amendment to one of the clauses, for the purpose of providing that of the income of any widow or spinster, up to the sum of 300l. a year, no more than one-twentieth be taken by this bill.

The amendment was rejected.

Sir J. PULTENEY, after taking a general view of the bill as it affected landed proprietors and commercial men, maintained the propriety of allowing to the landed interest the same advantage of secrecy from the assessor with regard to the disclosure of income as

was allowed to commercial persons, and for that purpose he moved an amendment in the clause which includes the oath, &c.

This amendment was supported by Sir W. Pulteney and Mr. Jones; and opposed by Mr. Chancellor Pitt, who retained the objections he had formerly urged against it; and also by Mr. Simeon, who, although he once approved of the general principle of the amendment, was now convinced of its danger, if not impracticability.

The amendment was put and negatived.

A number of other verbal amendments were then proposed by Mr. Chancellor Pitt, and adopted by the House.

Wednesday, January 2.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that having observed a notice was given that a motion would be made after the holidays to take into consideration the statements made respecting the prison of Cold-bath Fields, it would be necessary to lay before the House such documents as would give it information upon that subject, and prepare it for discussion. He therefore moved, that an humble address be presented to His Majesty, praying he will be graciously pleased to give directions for laying before the House a copy of an affidavit of the keeper of the prison in Cold-bath Fields, taken before Richard Ford, Esq. on the 31st of December last, and also the letter written by his Grace the Duke of Portland by His Majesty's command, in consequence thereof; which was ordered.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt moved the order of the day to take into farther consideration the Income Bill, which being read, several verbal amendments were agreed to; and there being not a single clause offered as a rider to the engrossment; the question was put that this bill do pass.—Ordered,

And that Mr. John Smith do carry it to the Lords, and desire their concurrence.

Thursday, January 3.

Mr. SPEAKER counted the House at four o'clock, and there being present only seventeen Members, an adjournment took place of course.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, January 4.

Lord GRENVILLE moved the order of the day for the third reading of the bill for suspending the Habeas-Corpus Act ; which being read,

The Earl of SUFFOLK said, it appeared to him necessary that Ministers should have assigned some reason for this bill before they proposed it to the House ; he wanted to know what they had to alledge in that particular ? To bring forward a measure, at all times grievous, without any necessity for it, was highly unjust ; and of the necessity of it, there was no proof given by His Majesty's Ministers. At the same time he acknowledged, that if the State was in danger, the present measure ought to be adopted ; his opinion of the necessity of it was to be guided by the evidence that might be adduced, or arguments urged in its favour : but he rose chiefly to observe, that if Ministers were to be entrusted with such a power as this bill would confer upon them, they ought, at all events, and in all cases, to use it with lenity and moderation ; and here his Lordship said, he was led to reflect on the case of a gentleman who he had not seen for seventeen years ; a man, he would venture to say, of as amiable manners and worthy disposition as any he ever knew. The gentleman to whom he alluded was Colonel Despard. He knew that gentleman, and another officer of great merit, whom the noble Earl mentioned, but whose name we did not distinctly hear ; he knew them in the service abroad, when his Lordship had a command of brigade. He had frequent occasions to converse with Colonel Despard, and he was convinced, from all he saw of him, that he was a man of an amiable and excellent disposition, equal to any he ever knew in his life. Indeed, the noble Earl said, it was not until very lately that he knew that Colonel Despard was in the situation which he is, and he only happened to learn it a few days ago in conversation ; and he now really knew very little of the situation of that gentleman, and that little he derived from the information of others ; and therefore, if he should happen to state any thing that was not correct, he hoped he should be excused ; and, indeed, he hoped that some of the information he had received was not true. The information was, that Colonel Despard was very severely treated in the prison in which he is now confined ; that he was kept in a cell of seven feet square, without fire, without light,

and without any thing to rest upon but a truckle bed. He did not, however, know this to be true; he only stated it upon the information of others. If true, it was a very hard case—a gentleman of such rank and character to be thus treated, was that which could not be justified. There was no specific charge against him; and it was said, that he was thus confined, and had been so for six months. He would appeal to the humanity of the noble Secretary of State; and he would also appeal to the humanity of all their Lordships, and ask, whether this was a situation in which a gentleman of the rank and character of Colonel Despard should be placed? He wished to know, whether this was a species of confinement fit for a gentleman of such a character, and against whom there was no crime alledged. His Lordship said, he understood that the brother of Colonel Despard was some time ago taken up and kept in confinement for about six weeks. He insisted that he had not been guilty of any crime, and that he was entitled to be set at liberty; after which he was told there was no charge against him, for that it was his brother Government wanted. These points the noble Earl mentioned only on the information of others, and he hoped they were not true to the extent they had been related to him: and if they were, he hoped that care would be taken to moderate them in future, as well as to make a mild use of the power which Government possessed in these particulars.

Having said this, he would venture to introduce another matter before their Lordships, not indeed immediately connected with the subject before the House, but of such a nature as to come naturally into view when any measure was considered that had any reference to conspiracy for treason. Perhaps he might again be abused for what he was about to do, as he had been for what he did, in some of the newspapers; he alluded to the evidence he gave on the trial of O'Connor at Maidstone. He wished to clear himself from any imputation that had been cast upon him upon that subject. He had indeed been wantonly and cruelly abused for the evidence he gave upon that occasion. He was in Scotland three or four months ago; and there he saw a character of the Earl of Suffolk as one of the witnesses for O'Connor, in which he was most wantonly and most grossly libelled, and in which it was made to appear as if he had been the intimate acquaintance of O'Connor. Now he did upon his honour most solemnly declare that he never had any conversation with O'Connor, except that about eleven years ago, and he said then what he said now, that from that conversation he was of opinion that he never met with a more gentlemanlike man in his life, and he never heard from him a sentiment that would not do honour to

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any man in England. At that time he was not above twenty-one years of age. He believed also that he stated he saw him two or three times in company with the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Moira, and another gentleman, for whose name and character he had not lost his respect on account of the difference that of late subsisted between them upon political points—he meant the late Mr. Serjeant Adair; and there he saw nothing that induced him to change his opinion respecting O'Connor. His evidence was afterwards tortured and misrepresented in some of the papers devoted to the interest of Government, and he was treated in a manner of which His Majesty's Ministers, he hoped, were ashamed. So much was he from having any desire to overstate any thing on that trial, that when the prisoner's attorney came to ask him what was the substance of his evidence, he insisted on seeing the brief that was to contain the questions that were to be put to him by the prisoner's counsel, and he directed every thing to be left out of the brief except that to which he could depose as far as it regarded himself. He really stated these things because he thought it necessary to contradict so many libels which had gone abroad against him on account of the evidence which he gave at Maidstone. He stated to Lord Hopeton what he had now stated to their Lordships; and that noble Lord had said he was much obliged to him, for that the libels which had gone abroad upon this subject had made a very unfavourable impression. He should not trouble the House any farther upon the subject: what he had said he conceived to be necessary for the vindication of his own honour. He begged only to make one more observation on the case of Colonel Despard: it was not to the confinement only of Colonel Despard that he objected (although that was hard, if there was no specific charge against him), but also to the manner of his confinement: such a measure was grievous to the subject: it might be the case of any other man in the kingdom. If these things were to be done without any reason for them, no man can be safe.

Lord GRENVILLE said, that all, or at least the greater number of the reasons, upon which their Lordships had thought it necessary to suspend the Habeas-Corpus Act last session, still existed, and would doubtless induce them to continue the suspension. He therefore should not say any thing more upon that subject at present. With regard to the newspaper misrepresentation of which the noble Lord had complained, he could assure him that no one abhorred more than he did those libels with which private and public characters of every description were daily assailed. Nothing was more injurious in this country than the licence now taken by the

press. Indeed it was his opinion, as he understood it had been already stated in another place, that if the wisdom of Parliament did not devise some means of preventing the circulation of the seditious and treasonable writings, of the daring and atrocious libels which were constantly published in a multitude of shapes, it would be impossible to answer for the security of the Government, and the preservation of the Constitution. The country might be armed, and its income expended, but every effort was useless if this intestine ulcer was suffered to prey upon its vitals. None regretted more than he did the licentiousness of the press, and feeling these sentiments, the noble Lord might be assured that he sincerely joined with him in the propriety of making his complaint of the misrepresentation to which he had been subjected. Indeed he was not surprised that the noble Lord had taken an opportunity of making this explanation. He did not wonder that he should be anxious to disclaim all acquaintance with Mr. O'Connor's political conduct in this country. It was indeed very singular that his Lordship, who only knew Mr. O'Connor eleven years ago in Ireland, and had seen him but once in this country, in company with that respectable character, the late Mr. Serjeant Adair, should have been called upon to give evidence at Maidstone in favour of that gentleman. It did not appear that his Lordship could have any knowledge of Mr. O'Connor's late connections; but he believed it was not unfortunate for Mr. O'Connor that such persons as his Lordship should be called in that way. It had happened that his Lordship's evidence was a good evidence for Mr. O'Connor. There was one remark he should make here, which was, that he did not expect to hear it stated that a gentleman might not possess the most agreeable manners, the most amiable disposition, and the most extensive information, and yet be the worst of criminals. He begged the noble Lord to reflect, whether a gentleman to whom he had alluded, might not possess all the good qualities he had stated to belong to him, and yet that this character might not be sufficient to constitute his acquittal of the charge under which he might labour. With regard to the treatment of the State Prisoners, he would assure the noble Lord that it was only within a few days that it had come to his knowledge that any complaint was made upon this subject either as to the usage of the prisoners in general, or the particular treatment of Colonel Despard. This subject was, however, one which had already been before the public, and was likely to undergo farther discussion, and he was convinced, that whenever it should be completely investigated, it would sufficiently appear that no unnecessary severity had been exercised either on the part of Government, or of

the persons to whose care the prisoners had been entrusted. With regard to the bill now before the House, he should only repeat what he had already said, that the reasons which had formerly existed for adopting a similar measure, were not yet removed.

Lord HOLLAND said, it was his intention to have opposed this bill in a preceding stage, but upon coming down to the House he found it hurried forward in so extraordinary a manner, that, though he arrived at the regular time, the business was concluded. He should have expected that their Lordships would not have advanced one step in a measure of this kind until evidence had been produced of its necessity; but he was astonished to find that the bill had been read a second time without one word being said either for or against it. Their Lordships were informed that the same reasons existed now as were urged when this bill was before the House on a former day—to which he would answer, that the reasons could not be the same, for the situation of the country and of its enemies was very different now from what it was then; to shew the truth of this he should read a passage out of the Proclamation of April last:

“Whereas it appears that the preparation for the embarkation of troops and warlike stores are now carried on with considerable and increasing activity in the ports of France, Flanders and Holland, with the avowed design of attempting the invasion of His Majesty’s dominions; and that in this the enemy is encouraged by the correspondence and communications of traitorous and disaffected persons and societies of these kingdoms.”

[*Vide* DEBRETT’S Collection of STATE PAPERS on the WAR; vol 7. fo. 569.]

Did His Majesty’s Ministers mean to assume that it was notorious there were traitorous designs now carrying on in this country, or that the enemy were preparing an invasion, with considerable and increased activity? He should think it an insult if such a reason was stated. Was the Habeas corpus Act to be suspended for the 4th time, though the reason for its suspension had ceased? Of the importance of that act he had no occasion to say much; there could be no man who did not perfectly know that it was to that act of Parliament alone he owed his personal freedom; that it was to that act he was indebted for the privilege of walking the streets in safety; that without it he would be liable to a prison, to all the horrors of a loathsome dungeon, without any appeal to the laws, without any prospect of the humane and beneficent trial by his equals, and all this at the will of an arbitrary Minister; he trusted there was no man so dead to his public duty as to abandon the bulwark raised by our ancestors for the preservation of the country, without the

most imperious necessity. If such necessity did exist, let it be proved; it would be for their Lordships to consider whether any such proof had been adduced; and here he begged to be allowed to state it as his opinion, that nothing which had taken place for the last four years, was sufficient to justify the suspension of an act so valuable to the liberty of the subject. Probably he might be told to-night, that there were the same reasons for suspending it, as had ever been considered sufficient. It might be said, the designs of our enemies were manifest; that it was necessary to sacrifice some part of our Constitution to preserve the rest. He might be told of the detestable consequences of French principles; that there were men in this country, who had so rooted an aversion to its Government and Constitution, that nothing would serve them but overturning it. But even admitting all this, he could not consider it as sufficient for suspending the Habeas-corpus Act. He was, however, ready to declare that there might be circumstances of a peculiar nature which might justify its suspension; but he never could allow that the warlike preparations of an enemy, or the disaffection of the people, the natural consequence of a war, were reasons weighty enough to induce the Parliament to give up so important a privilege into the hands of Ministers. This country had been often at war, and Ministers had existed ready to avail themselves of every insidious means to extend their power, but they had not made war a plea for the suspension of the Habeas-corpus Act. The calamities attendant upon a declaration of war were oppressive enough of themselves; but loath should he be to admit, in addition to those calamities, that a declaration of war should necessarily imply a diminution of the liberty of the people, or an increase of the power of the crown. He was ashamed to see that those very men who were the readiest to pronounce high-flown panegyrics upon the Government and Constitution of the Country, were always the most eager to adopt those measures which tended to destroy both. They praised the Constitution, and at the same time were impairing it; they admired the government, while they were rendering it oppressive. He firmly believed the Constitution was adequate to its own protection. Even at periods when the vigilance of factions was afloat, it had always been found sufficient to preserve its inherent vigour and energy; and feeling this, he should think it a desertion of his duty, if he ever consented to suspend an act, to the operation of which so much of that vigour and energy was owing. Who would have supposed, six years ago, that the suspension of the Habeas-corpus Act would ever have been demanded by Ministers as a mere matter of course; that a bill to suspend it should have

passed to its last stage, without an argument being urged to convince Parliament of the necessity of such a measure ; or that upon the assertion of Ministers, that a conspiracy existed, the privileges of the country were to be suspended ? In fact the existence of a few men dissatisfied with the Government, or tainted with what were called Jacobinical principles, was not sufficient to authorize a suspension of the Habeas-corpus Act ; neither, if French principles did prevail among any part of the people, was it the way to meet them, to draw a line of distinction which should separate the rich from the poor, and withdraw protection from the one while it was afforded to the other. The House had got so much into the argument of sacrificing a part to preserve the rest, that they seemed to have forgot that there were laws for punishing treason, without suspending the Habeas-corpus Act. There was but one state of circumstances he knew of which could justify it, and that was where a conspiracy existed, so artful in its arrangement, wherein the nature, extent, and object of it were so difficult to be developed, that the discharging any one person who had been taken up on suspicion, would necessarily inform all the parties concerned, and give them an opportunity of eluding the justice of the country ; but even in that case he would be cautious to whom such power was entrusted. It would be to those who had wisdom to understand the power, and resolution not to abuse it. He would tell them that by putting such a power in their hands it was not intended they should indiscriminately arrest all persons they pleased, those even against whom they had no evidence ; but merely, that they were to delay the trials of those against whom they had evidence, but whom it would be imprudent to bring to immediate trial. Unless they fully understood this, no danger, however alarming, no conspiracy, however extensive, should induce him to suspend the Habeas-corpus Act, so long as there were tribunals in the country for the peaceful administration of justice, so long as there remained a semblance of law and government. See whether it was necessary at this period ; to prove it was, some documents should have been produced, if for nothing else, at least to have preserved the character of the House, and to have convinced the people they did not wantonly wrest from them what their ancestors had considered necessary for their security. Even though every one of their Lordships were assured of the necessity for passing the bill, it would be preserving a degree of decorum, that some proofs were brought to shew it was upon necessity, and not out of wantonness, they proceeded. But it was notorious to their Lordships, no one document had been offered ; all the materials on which the House could proceed, consisted in the suggestions of Ministers as to the

state of public affairs. But would those suggestions be now relied on, or could their Lordships entertain any doubt as to the dispositions of the people of this country, after the events of last year? Would they not allow, that the people at the period to which he alluded, although they were then labouring under burdens unparalleled, had sacrificed to the utmost extent of their means, certainly beyond the most sanguine expectations, the moment they were apprised of danger? Such was their regard for the person of His Majesty, such their attachment to the country, that they cordially and generally came forward to defend the one and support the other. However they might have bewailed that conduct which had reduced them to their present situation, they came forth with one hand, with one heart, to repel the enemy and assist their King. After a people had so exerted themselves, it was insulting their feelings to allow a bill, filled with calumnies and libels on them, to remain three days in the House, and even to pass to its last stage, without an argument to shew its necessity. He was sure, from what he had repeatedly heard from the noble Secretary, every one must feel the necessity of confidence between the governors and the governed; but what confidence could exist, if the enthusiasm displayed by the people was met with coldness; if the cheerfulness with which they paid taxes, unequal and oppressive as they were, was received with disgust? What could be expected from such treatment? Would they not naturally argue, that those persons were unworthy of the confidence of the people who seemed to have so little regard for theirs? Thus, then, it appeared, from the comparative state of public affairs, this year and the last, that the reason for suspending the Habeas-corpus Act no longer existed, the preamble of the bill no longer applied. Thanks to the rashness of the enemy; thanks to the bravery and skill of the British seamen; and, above all, thanks to the victory obtained by Lord Nelson; and thanks, no less, to the vigour and activity of the Admiralty, the danger of invasion was not only removed, but wholly destroyed. The plea, therefore, founded on the apprehension of invasion, was at an end, and no other remained but that of the conspiracies of the very people who had so cheerfully met the demands of Government. But then followed the argument, that the Executive Government were the best judges of the necessity, and that the House must know they had not brought forward, nor ever would bring forward, a proposition to suspend the Habeas-corpus Act, unless they were convinced of the existence of a conspiracy. With respect to that argument, he wished to know in what chapter of the Constitution of this country there was any thing to be found to oblige Parliament to believe Ministers when they were

recommending what was to place additional power in their hands. They might say, it was not their interest to misuse the power entrusted to them ; but, to this he would observe, there were men possessed of a depraved appetite that could bear no restraint ; men, whose thirst for power was such, that they cared not how unnecessary any measure of rigour was, provided it tended to increase their power. The constitutional words, jealousy of Ministers, should lead the House to withhold confidence, and to refuse to resign power out of their hands, unless where the necessity was fully proved. He could see nothing in the conduct or language of Ministers to induce the House to wave that jealousy in their favour. He could look back, and see that those individuals who had been brought to trial under every disadvantage, with the prejudice of Ministers against them, had been proved innocent ; to the honour of the Juries who had tried them, they had conquered every prejudice, and acquitted them. When he considered the result of those trials, he had little hesitation in saying, that far from thinking Ministers should be indulged with additional power, there never was a time when it was less necessary. He maintained the system by which they governed was a system of alarm ; they knew they had no way of diverting the people from reflecting on the miseries of the war, and their own incapacity, but by raising an alarm, that all who opposed the war were Jacobins, and leagued with the French to destroy the country. This was the way in which the Government had been supported, and Ministers enabled to pass this and bills of a similar tendency ; but he believed the juggle would not continue long : he did not think the people would be long inclined to believe them on that subject : he believed the cry of Jacobinism would not long take hold ; but that the people of this country would enter into a serious examination of the conduct of Ministers. They seem to him to have overshot their mark. Their signal for alarm would not now raise an alarm ; they had rung the alarm bell so long in the people's ears, that it would no longer awaken them. Neither the failure of the object of the war, or the distresses of the people, had prevented them from evincing a line of conduct last year, when the country was threatened, that reflected the highest degree of honour on themselves—the ungenerous treatment they had received from Ministers in return astonished him. So far from recanting their former assertion of disaffection among the people, they had obliquely added to them, and now continued to load them with calumnies which they knew were not deserved. He trusted the people would, to the satisfaction of Europe and of posterity, contradict those calumnies ; and he trusted also, that their actions would soon contradict

another calumny, namely, that of their being intended by Administration to assist their views against themselves, and through the medium of alarm to become a party supporting the attacks of Ministers against their own liberty, freedom, and independence.

Lord GRENVILLE said, that if the debate on this bill had depended on the merits of the individuals who compose the present Administration, he should certainly have no hope, perhaps no ambition, to convince the noble Lord of the propriety of any part of the measure—indeed it would, perhaps, be difficult to persuade that noble Lord of the propriety of any measure of His Majesty's Ministers. He had acted uniformly, as if he thought them wrong in every thing; but although His Majesty's Ministers had not the approbation of that noble Lord, yet they had repeatedly received the support of a considerable part of the House he had now the honour of addressing. There were some minds on which prejudice had so strong an effect, that even facts would not alter them; there were others on whom facts and the reasoning and deduction that followed a series of events had much impression. He should therefore rather ask for the assent of others in the House, than for the assent of the noble Lord who had just spoken.

As to the trial of persons who were acquitted at the Old Bailey, he thought the point had been given up, and that it was never to be insisted upon again, that the acquittal of these persons invalidated the reports of the two Houses of Parliament relative to the existence of a conspiracy against the Government of this country. Were we to know, at this time, after all that had happened, that the acquittal, the honourable acquittal, of persons indicted for high treason, was a proof of entire innocence? Were we now to learn that it was impossible for any man to be acquitted, and afterwards prove to be guilty of high treason? He would say, that, so far was the event of these trials from negating the assertion of the reports, of the existence of a conspiracy, that it tended to confirm it; the manner in which the defence of the first person who was put upon his trial established, beyond the possibility of a doubt, the existence of a conspiracy in this country, and the truth of all the assertions in the reports of the two Houses upon that subject—and, by the way, before the noble Lord said any thing against these reports again, let him read the reports; if he had read these reports, he would have found that no one person was named in the whole of them; that they were left imperfect, even rather than that they should be supposed to inculcate any individual whatever, so delicate had both Houses of Parliament been upon that subject. But it seemed there was no evidence of any conspiracy. Did the noble Lord ever hear that

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it was proved on these trials, or was now doubted, that there existed in this country a certain society called the Corresponding Society? The object of that society was, under the mask of Parliamentary Reform, to pull down the Government of this country, to destroy all the protection which it at present afforded to property, and to introduce a new system of things in this country on the model of the French Government. These things, his Lordship said, were proved at the trials at the Old Bailey, to which the noble Lord had alluded, and in which acquittals he had triumphed so much. They were so well understood to be proved, even by the counsel for the prisoner who was first tried (Hardy), that the best defence the learned gentlemen could make for their client (he was not blaming them for it, they were right in doing every thing they could for their client); but the best defence they were able to set up was, that no man could be ignorant of the facts, but that the prisoner was a poor, harmless, simple, inoffensive man, and that if any mischief was intended by any body, he did not know, or was in the least aware of it—and the acquittal of the others turned very much on the acquittal of the first; but nobody ever thought of doubting the views entertained by some members of this society.

With respect to another point brought forward by the noble Lord against His Majesty's Ministers, namely, that they represent every person as a Jacobin who did not agree with them in politics; all he could say was, that he had not known of any such disposition yet; but if there had been any such disposition in the Ministers of Government, he knew of no Opposition that had ever been seen in this country to whom Ministers owed such obligations as they did to the present, if it was their desire to call them Jacobins, or men attached to French principles. The noble Lord had talked of Ministers having alarmed the House and the public, for the purpose of passing the bill now before their Lordships; and had also complained that the second reading of it was conducted so quietly, that, had it not have been for the accident of being a few minutes too late he should have opposed the second reading. These charges were not very consistent with each other; for if alarm was the foundation of the bill, or the cover for it, the passing it secretly would be impossible. But the noble Lord had asked, on what evidence Ministers maintained the necessity of this bill? He would refer the noble Lord to the very evidence, part of which he had referred to already—[Here the noble Secretary quoted the words of the Proclamation in April last, which stated that our enemies were aided and abetted by persons in this country, &c. &c.]—and then observed, that the evidence was last year deemed so satisfactory, that

the bill now before the House then passed unanimously. But had not the fact turned out as His Majesty's Ministers had foretold it? Was it not confirmed in the case of a person who was acquitted, honourably acquitted, at Maidstone? The House need not be told he alluded to the case of O'Connor. Had not that traitor, since his trial and honourable acquittal, thrown himself upon the mercy of that gracious Sovereign whom he had conspired with other traitors to dethrone? Had he not afterwards, to obtain that mercy, detailed upon his oath circumstances which were afterwards confirmed by a Rebellion? But was that all? Had not another person, confederate with O'Connor (O'Coigly) been convicted of treason upon the evidence of a paper, by which it appeared that a communication was to be made to the French Directory, not from any society in Ireland, but from a society in England? Was not that paper the evidence on which the Jury convicted that traitor? All these things he stated to shew, that the assertion of there having been a conspiracy in this country was not lightly made. What was the case at the present moment? That a treasonable conspiracy had existed in Ireland, ever since the year 1791, he referred to the reports of both Houses of Parliament in that country. By this it was manifest that the design had been long conceived of separating Ireland from this country. This was planned by a society. The very formation of that society was to put forward a Parliamentary Reform as a cloak to the real design, but not to shew that design until they thought some impression was made on the minds of the people; the mask was afterwards partly thrown off, for instead of a Reform in Parliament, they talked of a free Parliament. Nor was this plan the less detestable on account of religion being made use of as a cloak to cover its iniquity. This plan was followed up also in England. Did any man believe that the real design of the meeting at Chalk Farm was to reconcile the people of England to a peaceable, constitutional Parliamentary Reform? No man could think so who was not blinded by prejudice. This country contained a number of disaffected men; and it had been made the depot of the treasonable endeavours of many who were concerned in the Irish Rebellion. As to the idea that the people of England would conceive themselves calumniated by this bill, he owned he did not see any reason to apprehend any such thing, any more than they would think they were called murderers, because a law was made against murder; and if he thought the discontent of the people of England against Government was general, he should not propose this measure, because, in such a case, little could be done by the imprisonment of a few. But he was persuaded the people

would view this bill as Ministers intended to use it, not for the destruction of their liberty, but for the continuance and protection of it; a measure which was not to bring them to misery, but was adopted in tenderness of their future happiness, as well as of their present security.

Lord HOLLAND said, that he never had asserted absolutely that the verdict of a Jury proved that no conspiracy did exist. This much it proved, however, that when Ministers did come to Parliament and ask for extraordinary powers, that they had taken up persons who were not guilty of that conspiracy, or that there was no conspiracy at all. This point the noble Secretary had been very ready to debate, but he had not touched upon several arguments which he had stated; nor did he say any thing of the present state of the country to justify the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. The reason recited in the preamble last year was, that the enemy were about to invade this country, and that they were to be assisted by their partisans in the design. It was not asserted, however, that this was now the state of the country. He did not think, however, that although this might be the fact, it necessarily followed that this was sufficient reason for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. With respect to the trials at Maidstone, the paper of which Quigley was the bearer, did not prove that the conspirators in this country were numerous or powerful. It was not signed; and surely the French Government could never have been so absurd as to act upon such a document as the proof that they would meet with co-operation. If the allegation, that there were discontented men in the community, was deemed sufficient, the conduct of a very few men might, on every occasion, be taken as the pretence for depriving a whole nation of its privileges. With respect to what had been said of Mr. O'Connor, he saw no reason why he might not have been said to be honourably acquitted. He had been acquitted of the crime for which he was tried at Maidstone; and though he was afterwards proved to be guilty of other treasons, that did not infer that he had not been properly acquitted of a previous charge. The noble Lord had alluded to the situation of Ireland. Did the noble Lord think that disturbances in Ireland was a good reason for suspending the Habeas Corpus here? He thought not. The noble Lord himself had said, that there was food and fuel for rebellion in Ireland. What then was to be done? Would it not be the best way to remove that fuel, rather than make laws against those who are supposed to be disposed to set fire to it? The system pursued in Ireland gave us strong reasons to think that severe laws were not the remedy for such an evil. Under all the attempts to repress it

by legislative severity, the Rebellion of Ireland had increased ; and if it was suppressed, it was by the valour of our troops, and the gallantry of our seamen. We had not much reason then to rely upon the effects of the system acted upon by Ministers, from the example of Ireland. He thought he had heard the noble Secretary say (and he begged to be understood, that he did not willingly mistake), that the purport of the bill was to enable Ministers to take up persons on bare suspicion without proof—[Here a noble Peer cried “ No ! ”] Certainly he conceived the object of such a bill to be, to enable Government to put off the trials of persons detained, upon some good reason to believe that their trials might be attended with disadvantage to the whole community. The noble Lord said, that instead of being brought forward to excite alarm, the bill had hitherto passed quietly. It was not a very consolatory reflection, however, that it did so pass. It was a proof that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus had now become so common as to be considered a measure nowise important or interesting. The noble Lord, too, had said, that the principles of certain persons in Ireland and here were the same—and he alluded to the meeting at Chalk Farm. Certainly, however, it was not the course of conspirators which the persons then assembling had followed ; and if they had entertained the designs imputed to them, they probably would have taken another course. Government, however, would much better consult the tranquillity of the Country, and the safety of the Constitution, by removing grievances, taking away colourable pretexts, and by leaving as little fuel as possible for rebellion, for incendiaries to work upon.

The House then divided : For the third reading of the bill, 26 ; Against it, 1.

Lord GRENVILLE moved the order of the day for the second reading of the Income-tax Bill.

Lord HOLLAND objected to the bill's being then read a second time, urging the necessity of not hurrying a measure of such magnitude through the House, and declaring that past experience shewed the impolicy of precipitately carrying bills of finance through both Houses of Parliament ; nay, in the very last session they had passed through a finance measure of considerable importance (the Land-tax Redemption Bill) so hastily, that as soon as it came to be carried into execution, it was found to be so imperfect that it had been absolutely necessary to bring in a bill, as soon as the present session commenced, to amend and correct the act of last session, so as to give it practicability and effect ; and that bill, their Lordships would recollect, had already received the royal assent. That

example alone, therefore, ought to induce the House to proceed now with more caution and more deliberation, and not almost the next day after a bill had been introduced, that went to take ten millions out of the pocket of the subject, which, if it failed, would entail the most calamitous consequences on many valuable classes of the people, to proceed to the second reading of it. Their Lordships ought to be allowed somewhat more time to consider of the principle of the bill, before they were called upon to give it their sanction. He hoped, therefore, there would be no objection to postponing the second reading to Monday next; and with that view he moved, that the House do now adjourn.

Lord GRENVILLE said, that where a measure was of great importance, and the principle of it, from its nature, was not clearly to be conceived without much previous examination, he should ever hold it his duty to give ample time for due deliberation, and above all things to avoid the indecent office of pressing it upon their Lordships with unbecoming haste and precipitancy; but in the present instance he saw no reason whatever to warrant the delay of a day or two before the House proceeded to read the bill a second time. That House had already recognized the principle of the bill, which was extremely simple, and had nothing complicated or difficult in it. They had acted upon it last year, when they agreed to the Assessed-taxes Bill, which was founded precisely on the same principle, viz. the principle of raising a large portion of the supplies of the year by the exertions of the subjects, and their consenting to submit to a contribution adequate to that object, rather than the money should be raised as heretofore, by loan, which would necessarily entail a load of taxes on them in perpetuity. So universally admitted was the wisdom and policy of adopting that principle, that he had not conceived there could have been one noble Lord found, or one individual capable of judging upon such subjects, who would have expected or deemed it in the smallest degree necessary for him to have said a word in its recommendation. The experiment of the principle had been last year tried, and tried with success, and the present bill was nothing more than following up the principle by another mode of taxation, and endeavouring to make it bear more equally, and with greater effect upon the different ranks of people. It had long been received and submitted to as an undeniable axiom, that it was impossible for the ingenuity of man to devise a species of taxation so completely and entirely equal as to reach the summit of perfection; nor was it in measures of finance alone that it was impossible to attain perfection, it was inseparable from all human efforts of every kind whatsoever; but because absolute perfection in the equal bearings

of a mode of taxation could not be hoped for, there was no reason why an obvious improvement on a mode already tried, and an endeavour to bring it somewhat nearer to perfection, should be objected to; he was not a little surpris'd at the noble Lord's wishing to put off the second reading of the bill, which they were not called upon to read a second time the next day after it came into the House, but which had been two days before their Lordships, and the prints of which lay upon the table. If the detailed parts of it were liable to objection, the noble Lord would recollect that the bill must be read a second time before the House could go into the discussion of the enacting clauses, and therefore the sooner the bill was read a second time the better; or of those who meant to oppose the bill intended to reject it, that was a reason likewise for proceeding to read it, as the sooner it was rejected the more time would of course remain for the introduction of a new one in its room. His Lordship repeated, that the excellence of the principle of the bill, and the preference which every considerate man gave to it over the custom of raising the supplies by loan, were so well known, that he could not see any just reason for delaying the second reading of the bill that evening, and therefore he must object to the noble Lord's motion to adjourn.

The Earl of SUFFOLK said, so far from objecting to the principle of the bill, it was a principle which he had always considered as the only wise principle of taxation in time of expensive war, and which their Lordships might recollect he had himself recommended last year in that House, as a principle more equal and more just than the mode then adopted; but though that was decidedly his opinion, yet when he considered the great object of the bill, which bore immediately and with a heavier pressure upon their Lordships than any other order of the people, for their Lordship's property, he would venture to declare, was ten times greater in amount than all the property of the other branch of the Legislature, he could not but object to the indecent haste that His Majesty's Ministers wanted to lead that House into; and to say that the postponing the second reading of the bill till Monday was a poor delay indeed, and much shorter than ought to be allowed. He must also alledge as a reason why the House ought to proceed more deliberately with a bill of so much importance, and which was calculated to take ten millions out of the pockets of the people at once, that the proper attention had not been paid to it elsewhere, and he thought he had a right to say, that the House of Commons had hurried it through with great precipitancy, and had afforded ground for complaint by passing the clauses lately introduced in very thin Houses. Those clauses were by no means infig-

nificant, and should have been attended to in another manner.—
[The words “ Order! Order!” were uttered by several Lords.]—
Lord Suffolk, therefore, after a few more corresponding remarks on the necessity of farther delay, sat down.

Lord GRENVILLE rose again to assure the noble Earl that he had been extremely misinformed as to the supposed precipitate treatment of the bill in another place. So far from it, he could take upon him to assert that no preceding bill of finance had ever experienced so full or so frequent a discussion of all its parts: neither had any bill whatever been more scrupulously examined and argued upon than that then under their Lordships’ consideration. With regard to the debates upon it, it was true they had not been occupied by long speeches, but the Members had been much more usefully employed in modelling, shaping and finishing, the several clauses, so as to render them practicable, and as little objectionable as possible; and in order to effect this no time or pains had been spared. Even the clauses laterly introduced had been all fully opened, and the view of them explained in the clearest manner—not perhaps to very full attendances, but to such gentlemen as had turned their minds most to the subject, and had taken a leading share in every proceeding upon the bill. He thought it necessary to say thus much to satisfy the noble Earl, although to do this he had fallen into some little irregularity, as it was not the province of that House to interfere with what passed in another place, or into any discussion of the manner in which it had conducted itself. He had, however, heard nothing to induce him to withdraw his motion, that the bill be read a second time that evening.

Lord HOLLAND said, the House might be satisfied that he never would act so disorderly as to allude improperly to what passed in another House of Parliament, but he still thought that more time ought to be allowed before the bill was read a second time. It was very true the prints of it lay upon the table, and the bill had been three days in the House; but yet it was not possible for noble Lords to have read it, or to be prepared to say, that they agreed to the principle on the naked statement of it in the abstract. Last year, upon the same principle, an experiment had been tried in the triple assessment of the taxes, and that experiment had failed; and the pretence for the present bill was, that it would operate more equally, and to a larger extent; that was at present merely a speculation, and before noble Lords committed themselves to it, they ought to have time for consideration, and to ask themselves how far they thought it wise to take it for granted? He owned for one he had maintained conversations on the subject with men competent to

speaking of it, and was not therefore altogether a stranger to the nature of the bill. Latterly, however, he had not so much attended to it, and had rather thought it right to reserve the making up of his mind upon it, till the bill came regularly before the House; nor was it a satisfactory argument to his mind, that the principle ought to be adopted, because absolute perfection, in point of equality in taxation, was admitted to be utterly unattainable; but that this bill attempted, what it was right to attempt, namely, to approach nearer to that perfection than the Legislature had done before. That argument might be urged with equal advantage in favour of any other bill, upon the subject of taxation. Another reason which he must again urge, for more time before the House proceeded farther with the bill, was the consideration of the calamitous effect the bill would have, if it failed. In that case it would drive hundreds and thousands to distress, and from distress to despair. That consideration alone, in his mind, was an unanswerable argument, and would make it a matter of conscience with him to persist in his motion to adjourn.

The LORD CHANCELLOR left the woolstack, and expressed his surprise that there should have arisen a single difficulty about reading the bill a second time, when their sole object in so doing was the adoption of the principle of it—a principle which the House had adopted and acted upon so lately. That principle rested upon two clear and distinct propositions—the one proposition was, Whether it was wiser to raise a considerable portion of the supplies of the year within the year, by a larger contribution on the part of the people, than by the mode of a loan, which would make more taxes necessary to pay the interest, and that in perpetuity? The other proposition was, How far, if the first proposition were admitted, the means provided by the bill were calculated to carry that proposition into practicable effect?—With regard to the first, it was no new subject of discussion. The wisdom and the principle of raising a large share of the supplies within the year had been considered at a period to which the memory of the noble Lord, at least, would not go—so long since as the year 1778, when it was a topic treated by various writers who examined it with considerable powers of research, and the arguments on both sides were brought forward, and the objections it was liable to, as well as the reasons in its favour, were fairly stated. That a wish to have the principle of raising a considerable part of the supplies within the year, by the mode provided by the present bill, was felt, and deemed the most preferable mode, he could easily prove by producing copies of the petitions sent up last session by populous trading towns and corpora-

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tions in different parts of the kingdom, in which that mode was expressly recommended, and desired to be adopted instead of the measure of the triple assessment. With regard to the second proposition, viz. how far the means of rendering the principle practicable, and carrying it into effect, were to be found in the provisions of the bill, that was a matter to be discussed in considering the detail of the bill, and consequently could not be got at till after the bill had been read a second time, and was referred to a Committee. Why, therefore, the noble Lord should object to the immediately reading the bill a second time, he could not imagine.

Lord HOLLAND said, the noble and learned Lord had, by stating the two propositions distinctly, given himself additional ground for wishing for more time, because every noble Lord must ask himself, whether he could so hastily adopt the second proposition, that the bill was a practicable means of raising the supplies, or, at least, a great part of them, within the year?—Ministers had, last session, brought forward the triple assessment as a fit means to effect that purpose, and now they owned it had failed, and they came forward with another measure to effect it. It did then behove their Lordships to consider well of the better practicability of the present proposition before they adopted it: at any rate he was extremely glad that the conversation that had passed had taken place, because when they did come into the Committee, it would not, as usual, be objected to him, that by not having opposed the second reading, he stood committed to the whole of the principle—a mode of argument which it was the general practice of Ministers to avail themselves of, after they had persuaded the House to pass the stage of the second reading. With regard to the noble Secretary on the cross bench saying, that if it was meant to reject the bill, the sooner it was read a second time the better; he could only consider that as an argument addressed to those noble Lords who meant to support it, and not to him who opposed it. As to the use of the delay he pressed for, how did he know, if the bill were rejected, but that a loan might be resorted to? At any rate he thought farther time might be useful.

The LORD CHANCELLOR left the woolfack and said, that the noble Lord had himself suggested a reason for reading the bill a second time directly, which had not occurred to him as applicable to the present question, viz. that it was highly necessary to examine how far the first proposition was rendered practicable by the provisions of the bill: if so, undoubtedly it was fit to read the bill a second time without farther delay, as it was impossible to judge of

the practicability of effecting the aim of the first proposition, that the provisions of the bill promised, before those provisions came regularly under discussion, which could only be in the Committee.

Lord HOLLAND repeated his former argument, and said, he meant to attend to the future consideration of the bill ; but he promised the House, that as he was aware of the peculiar regulations adopted and acted upon by the other House, in respect to bills of that nature, he never would wantonly, and without serious and weighty cause, move an alteration which should endanger the fate of a bill of importance.

Lord AUCKLAND said, he would detain the House but a very few minutes ; he rose merely to contradict an assertion that had been made more than once in the course of the debate, viz. that the measure of the triple assessment of the taxes had failed. He denied the truth of that assertion most decidedly, the fact being directly the reverse. The assessed taxes were, he believed, given for seven millions, and the money that had come in from them and the public spirit of the country, amounted to half a million more. What he meant to have said farther on the subject of the bill, he would reserve to a more convenient opportunity ; and if he understood the noble Lord (Lord Holland) rightly, that noble Lord meant the oppose the bill in the Committee, and to have what he had said, considered as a notice of such his intention. He wished to know, if he meant to give such a notice ?

Lord HOLLAND said, he had expressly declared that it was not his intention to move any alteration in any particular clause, for the reasons he had stated ; but he should examine and discuss the provisions of a bill, which, if it failed, must, as he had before said, be productive of very calamitous consequences to many classes of people.

The question was put, and the bill was read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, January 4.

Mr. STEELE acquainted the House, that His Majesty had been waited upon with an address of that House, requesting the affidavit of the Keeper of the Cold-bath-field prison respecting the treatment of the State Prisoners; with which request His Majesty was most graciously pleased to comply.

Mr. Long then brought up copies of letters from the Duke of Portland; also affidavits, &c. of the Keeper of the House of Correction, Cold-bath Fields, pursuant to the address of the House to His Majesty. The papers were directed to be laid upon the table for the perusal of the Members.

Honourable Mr. BRODERICK moved for the production of sundry accounts and estimates of expences attending the East-India establishments, and the production of sundry duties in the various provinces.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House, that the clerk had, in compliance with the directions of the act, made out a list of Members to compose the East-India Judicature.

Monday, January 7.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had received notice from the Court of Directors of the Bank, that on and after the 14th instant, the Bank would pay in cash, during the usual hours of business, all fractional sums under five pounds; and that on and after the 1st of February next, the Bank would pay in cash for all notes of one and two pounds value, that are dated prior to the 1st of July, 1798; or exchange them for new notes of the same value, at the option of the holders.

Mr. Speaker also acquainted the House, that he had, agreeably to an act passed last session, for continuing the restriction on the cash payments, caused the above notice to be inserted in the London Gazette.

The lists prepared by the clerk, agreeably to the provisions of the India Judicature bills, were referred to a Committee to examine and report the names of such Members of that House as should occur more than twenty times in those lists.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, January 8.

The Earl of SUFFOLK rose, and addressed the House to nearly the following purport.—I should be sorry, my Lords, to trespass on the time of your Lordships, by introducing at this time any matter not immediately before your Lordships; but, I flatter myself, I shall stand excused for so doing, when I inform the House that what I have now to say is for the purpose of correcting a misstatement which I was involuntarily led into on the other night of the meeting of your Lordships. What I then mentioned relative to Colonel Despard, I informed your Lordships, I did in a great measure on reports. I was induced to do so from having formerly known that gentleman in His Majesty's service, though I have not seen him for seventeen or eighteen years; but at the time I was acquainted with him, it was impossible for any gentleman to possess a fairer or more amiable character. I have, however, since that time received a letter, which induces me to believe that in what I stated on a former night, I was in some particular circumstances by no means correct; and as it has never been my intention to interfere in this business, farther than the dictates of humanity led me to attempt the alleviation of the sufferings of a gentleman, circumstanced as Colonel Despard is, I hope I shall be allowed to say a few words by way of correcting what I then, it seems, erroneously stated, as I would not wish, on any account, that any thing I have said respecting the treatment of persons imprisoned by the order of Government, should in any respect be misrepresented or misunderstood by the public. I will therefore beg leave to read to your Lordships the letter, or at least part of it, which I have received—[Here his Lordship read a part of the letter, which asserted the truth of the letter written by Mrs. Despard, setting forth the confinement of the Colonel, &c.]—But, proceeded his Lordship, I find, my Lords, the following is the material point in which I have been mistaken relative to the brother of Colonel Despard having been arrested and imprisoned for six weeks instead of the Colonel—[His Lordship then read farther from the letter, nearly to the following purport]:—"That he was mistaken or misinformed as to the confinement of the brother of Colonel Despard; for that it was the Colonel himself that had been apprehended and detained in custody during that time; at the end of which, either for want of any charge against him, or for other

causes, he had been discharged, and continued at liberty till the suspension of the Habeas-corpus Act took place, when he was immediately again arrested, and had been confined and treated in the manner before stated." I have thought it my duty, my Lords, proceeded the noble Earl, to state thus much to your Lordships, in order to shew my readiness and desire to correct what appeared to be a misstatement on my part, though I acknowledged at the time that what I said was founded chiefly on report. I will not, therefore, trouble the House farther at present than to assure them that I was, in the whole of my conduct in this business, influenced by motives of humanity, and a sincere wish that the confinement of persons on suspicion of crimes should be attended with every alleviating circumstance, which did not tend to risque their actual personal escape.

Lord GRENVILLE said, that so much had already been said upon this subject, it would not be necessary for him to trouble their Lordships with more than a very few words indeed. The noble Earl who spoke last, had declared, that he was influenced by motives of humanity alone. He was bold to say, that in respect to humanity, prisoners of every denomination were treated in this country, not only in the prison alluded to, but every other in the kingdom, with a far greater degree of humanity, than persons in the same situation were in any other nation or country on the face of the globe. It was impossible that their Lordships could seriously attend to the information conveyed by anonymous letters, or at least letters to which no name was affixed; but he had no doubt, that when real documents relative to the general state and government of the prison alluded to came to be laid before their Lordships, the impression would be very different indeed. From every thing he had heard on the subject, it appeared to him, that in the particular case of Colonel Despard, every attention had been paid to his complaints as soon as made, and such alleviations as the nature of circumstances would admit, had been instantly made in his favour.

The Earl of SUFFOLK said, that he had yesterday dined accidentally with Mr. Courtenay, at the house of a friend of his own, though when he went he did not know that gentleman was to be one of the company. That after dinner the conversation, naturally, after what had passed in that House and elsewhere, turned upon Colonel Despard's situation, and what had been said upon it. That Mr. Courtenay shewed his Lordship copies of letters which had been addressed to the Duke of Portland, and the particular dates of applications which had been made from time to time, to his Grace, and Mr. Wickham; and from these it appeared, that

so far from Colonel Despard having received any alleviation to his sufferings on his first application, it was nearly seven months before any notice had been taken of them at all. That it was not only by letters, that the noble Duke had been applied to, but Mrs. Despard had more than once or twice waited on Mr. Wickham for the same purpose, without obtaining any favourable answer, or any alteration in the Colonel's circumstances. That it was not till after Mr. Reeves went to pay a visit to the Colonel, that any alteration had taken place as to his treatment or situation; and, (much to the honour of that gentleman), he was informed, and believed, that it was entirely owing to his humane interference that any alteration had taken place. His Lordship then mentioned that, in addition to the severity of the Colonel's confinement, it appeared by the papers shewed to him by Mr. Courtenay, that the Colonel had been stinted to the general jail allowance of that prison, which was a certain portion of coarse beef and broth twice a week, and other particular messes still more homely. That Mrs. Despard had, indeed, been suffered to bring him, when she was permitted to visit him, twice a week, any additional comforts in the way of eatables, but was not allowed to furnish him with the smallest quantity of wine, or any other liquor. His Lordship then alluded to the great humanity which had been urged by the noble Secretary of State, as being used towards the prisoners of this country, far beyond that extended to those of any other nation on the face of the globe, and asked if the fare allotted to Colonel Despard was to be regarded as a specimen of it? When I knew him, (said his Lordship,) he was used to all the good cheer that the best tables could possibly afford; tables equal to those kept by myself, and most of the noble Lords in this House: for he was every day at the tables of two gentlemen, who, from their high rank and situation in life, were obliged to keep up that dignified shew and splendour which might vie with that of any noble Lord; and from every thing I was able to perceive in Colonel Despard at that time, I thought him a man of such amiable manners and excellent character, as to be highly deserving of any mark of respect and esteem which the proudest man could shew him. Surely, then, (said his Lordship), there appears to be an uncommon severity, not only in the confinement, but in the fare of the Colonel, considering that he is only confined on suspicion, and has had no trial; and it is an alarming consideration, that no man knows, so long as the Habeas-corpus Act continues suspended, how soon his fate may conduct him to the same melancholy situation as that of Colonel Despard.

The Duke of PORTLAND said, that after what had fallen from the noble Earl who had just sat down, he must beg leave to trouble their Lordships with a few words, and they should be very few indeed. He felt much surprised at hearing this matter once more brought forward, and imagined, after what had passed a few nights ago, it had been done with. With respect to what had been said about Colonel Despard, he could assure their Lordships, every attention had been paid to his complaints; but indeed the Colonel himself had not made any. Had he had the smallest idea, that the matter would again have been touched upon this evening, he would have brought the necessary documents in his pocket, to convince their Lordships of the truth of what he had then said.

Lord HOLLAND said, that he did not rise to trouble their Lordships on any thing personally relative to the situation or treatment of Colonel Despard in prison, not having the honour of knowing him, or being particularly acquainted with the circumstances attending his case, except what he had heard in their Lordships' House. There were some few words, however, which had this night fallen from the noble Secretary of State, on which he should beg leave to make a few observations. The noble Secretary had said, "that prisoners of all denominations were treated in this country with a degree of humanity far beyond that of any other nation on the face of the globe." It might be that in many cases they were so; but he would ask the noble Secretary in what country on the face of the globe prisoners were treated with the severity which had been stated, who were confined merely on suspicion? He knew of none. There was one thing, however, which the noble Secretary had passed by without the slightest notice, though it was the leading feature of what had been brought forward this night by his noble friend, and which in his mind deserved the most attentive consideration. This was the circumstance on which were founded the mistake and the mistatement which his noble friend had just before acknowledged and cleared up, viz. that Colonel Despard himself had been arrested and confined six weeks and then discharged, immediately antecedent to the time of passing the suspension of the Habeas-corpus Act, and then very soon after that suspension took place he had been again arrested, and confined with that degree of severity which had been represented. His Lordship confessed that he was sorry he did not know of this circumstance before the farther extension of that act came before their Lordships, as it would have been with him very strong and convincing argument and reason for still more strenuously opposing it. He should have liked to hear what the noble Lord on the cross bench had to

say respecting this point, and could not but lament that a power should be placed in the hands of any set of men to imprison and confine the subjects of this country, arrested merely on suspicion, with a degree of severity which ought only to attach to those who, after a fair trial, had been convicted.

Lord GRENVILLE rose, but observing the Lord Chancellor had left the woolstack, his Lordship gave place accordingly.

The LORD CHANCELLOR began by informing their Lordships, that he had quitted the woolstack for the purpose of putting an end to the present conversation, which was in itself not only very irregular, but would be made the means of giving an extensive circulation to what was said there, which, published as proceeding from any other place, would be highly reprehensible. If any noble Lord in that House had any motion to bring forward respecting the treatment of the prisoners in the jail alluded to, he could assure them that the noble Lords who had the honour to compose in part the government of the country, would be glad to receive and attend to such motion, with every degree of frankness and candour that any noble Lord could possibly desire. It was certainly the duty of that House to attend most seriously to any charge which might be brought against those who were entrusted with the care and confinement of prisoners, whenever such charge should be gravely and properly brought forward in a regular course of proceeding; and he could assure their Lordships, that Government were anxiously desirous of such a legal investigation taking place; but it was idle to suppose their Lordships ought to suffer their minds to be impressed with anonymous reports, or scraps of letters written they knew not where, and sent by they knew not whom—or to conversations of gentlemen who may have brought any such matters forward in any other place. With regard to the prison alluded to, he had reason to believe, from the information he had received, that the discipline of it was and had been such as to conduce very much, by the proper treatment of those confined in it, to the advancement of their moral good, and very much to the benefit of society. That since certain steps had been taken, however, the place had become very disorderly. This prison was, his Lordship said, regulated by rules highly beneficial to the interests of those who were confined in it. Visiting Magistrates, composed of some of the most respectable characters in the country, went over the prison at stated periods in order to make inquiries, and listen to the complaints of every prisoner who had any to make respecting his treatment. One of those visiting Magistrates—a gentleman to whose worthy and amiable character every man who knew him would most readily subscribe;

he had no wish to conceal his name ; it was the Rev. Dr. Glaspey, a clergyman of the greatest worth and humanity—had informed him, that the place had lately become very disorderly, and he was apprehensive that more strict discipline, with respect to those who were admitted to visit it, must be hereafter observed, otherwise the good effects which had previously resulted from the regulations adopted, and which had proved of the greatest benefit to several who had been confined there, would be rendered of little or no avail. The rules and regulations of the prison, his Lordship said, were printed, and might be seen and read by every one ; and if people would attentively read and consider them, it would effectually do away the silly, idle, ridiculous nicknames which had been so readily given to the prison in Clerkenwell by hackney coachmen, and, perhaps, some gentlemen who may have chosen to use them in speaking of it in other places. Nothing, his Lordship said, could be more contradictory than many of the reports which had been circulated respecting the persons confined there. One gentleman had asserted, that Mrs. Despard was only allowed to speak to her husband through a grate ; another, no less respectable, had declared, that when he went there, he saw Mr. and Mrs. Despard sitting together very comfortably before the fire in the Lodge. All these things, his Lordship observed, evinced that matters, thus loosely brought forward, ought not to make any impression on their Lordships' minds. When gravely and regularly entered upon, Government would be ready to give the business the most ample and deliberate investigation. There was one thing which a noble Lord (Holland) had particularly dwelt upon as not being taken notice of by the noble Secretary of State, which was, that of Colonel Despard's being liberated, and after the suspension of the Habeas Corpus again arrested. His Lordship said he could take upon him to assure the noble Lord, that it was on fresh information, and new circumstances, which had arisen and been received subsequent to the passing the suspension of the Habeas-corpus Act, that Colonel Despard had been arrested again.

The order of the day for the third reading of the Income Bill being read,

The Earl of SUFFOLK said :—I rise, my Lords, to give my opposing voice to the third reading of this bill, and, at the same time, to state to your Lordships the reasons which influence my conduct in so doing. No man, my Lords, is more willing than I am, and I have declared the same sentiment during the two last sessions, to submit to a fair, equal, and equitable tax upon income. But the present I can by no means allow to be a measure of that

nature ; I conceive that it is neither equal nor equitable ; and that if it be carried into effect, it will be productive of consequences very mischievous to the country at large. My Lords, I contend that the operation of this bill will be peculiarly heavy and oppressive on the gentlemen of landed property—so much so, indeed, that the land will never be able to bear it. This tax, my Lords, is calculated and asserted to affix no more than a tenth upon income ; but I think, my Lords, I shall be able to shew your Lordships, that it will, in fact, be found to amount to nearly, if not full, twenty per cent. I shall not quote to your Lordships any very high authority for what I am about to state, but shall content myself with laying before your Lordships the situation in which I stand with regard to my own property. It is said, that this tax is only ten per cent. upon my income ; but, my Lords, I beg leave to remind your Lordships, that last session a tax upon salt took place, which, in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and other counties, upon what is called the dairy farms in particular, will, in its operation, be equal to 4 per cent. There is also a very heavy article, which, in many places, and particularly on estates adjoining to mine, the poor rates, fall uncommonly heavy. This, my Lords, is owing to a very extensive common which adjoins some estates I have, as well as those of a noble Lord near, in the parish of Brinksworth ; and I can appeal to many noble Lords, that where there are those extensive commons, the poor naturally flock to them ; and in the particular place which I have just mentioned, I believe, I am within bounds when I state the poor rates at 3 per cent. This added to the other makes with the tax imposed by the present bill 17 per cent. When we cast our eye to the necessary expences of bailiffs, stewards, and other numerous incidentals to landed property, we cannot reasonably place less than 5 per cent. to that account, which makes the whole nearly 20 per cent., and which, when applied to every part of the kingdom, is a prodigious hardship, which threatens the most pernicious effects to the landed property, and which, I am thoroughly convinced, is far more than it can or ought to bear. Having stated thus much, my Lords, as to the operation of the tax on my land, I will beg leave to say a few words as to the system I have pursued in improvements. Few men, I believe, have paid more attention to agricultural improvements than myself. I have, in the course of the last few years, expended in improvements more than 15,000l. ; in doing which, my Lords, I have of course submitted to the privation of a great many of those comforts which persons of my rank in life may very naturally and fairly be allowed to be indulged in. It must be evident, my Lords, that I have not done this for my

own personal gratification. No, my Lords; I was induced to such a line of conduct, in order that I might transmit to my son an estate as independent as the principles which I have endeavoured to instill into his mind, and which might always prove the means of enabling him to act up to them. Many other noble Lords, I dare say, there are, who have acted upon the same system with myself. I now call upon such noble Lords, and caution them to beware how they give their sanction to a measure which falls so peculiarly heavy and oppressive on the landed interest in particular. Very different indeed is the situation of the noble Lords upon the cross bench, and other parts of the House, whose situations bring them in very large emoluments, which they no doubt well deserve, for the high, important, and arduous stations they fill in the administration of the Government of the country. These noble Lords, however, have only to pay their ten per cent. out of the seven, eight, or ten thousand a year, which they receive. They have no salt duties, amounting to four per cent. no poor-rates, bailiffs, stewards, broken farmers, and other unavoidable incidentals of that nature to affect them. They have beside a rich field of patronage open to them, wherewith to gratify the blooming hopes and rising ambition of their younger sons and nearest relatives, in the extensive and lucrative branches of the navy, the army, and the church. These are circumstances which may make noble Lords look lightly on a tax of ten per cent. upon income; but when it falls in so oppressive a manner upon land, it becomes very hard indeed to those who have only their land, and what they can save from it, to support the younger branches of their several families. For my own part, my Lords, I have ever prided myself in the independence of my principles. I never was, nor am ever likely to be, connected with any party, or head of a party; and when my second son some time ago expressed a wish to go into the army, I strenuously advised him against it, though I have ever entertained the highest respect for it. But I well knew, and endeavoured to convince him of it, that he might remain for years a subaltern, if he had not ministerial interest, or money sufficient to purchase the necessary steps of preferment. He has, therefore, embraced a profession, in which, if he has talents, he will be able by them to acquire both honour and emoluments. Before I sit down, my Lords, I hope I may be permitted to say a word or two about France, without being supposed to make any invidious distinction in favour of that country. Whenever this war may be terminated, her commerce may perhaps be destroyed, but if I am rightly informed, she has made very great improvements in agriculture, which cannot fail to be highly beneficial to her future

interests ; and this she has been enabled to do by a measure which no person can look upon with more abhorrence, or view as a more atrocious measure than myself—I mean, my Lords, the means by which they got rid of their tithes—Men who have dedicated their lives and studies to the improvement of the morality, and the discharge of the religious functions of a country, certainly ought to be liberally supported and well paid for their labours ; but the amount ought also to be attended to. Whatever alterations they might deem necessary to adopt in the system of tithes, the then possessors were entitled to the emoluments during their lives, and their improvements should have commenced with the successors. Atrocious, however, as the act of at once seizing on the tithes of the country must be allowed to be, they are likely to reap the most incalculable advantages from it. This, my Lords, induces me to say a few words relative to the subject of tithes in the country, and to suggest to your Lordships how much for the general good it must turn out if something were seriously thought of, and brought forward on that subject. There is nothing which has long laid more heavily on all agricultural improvements than tithes, and an amelioration of their weight is most desirable. It is a very mistaken notion that they amount only to a tenth ; taking in all the improvements, they certainly contain a fifth of the property of the kingdom. I am assured from the best authority, that tithes, and their oppressive weight, first gave rise to the discontents, and afterwards brought about the late insurrection and rebellion in Ireland. The people of this country are every day feeling their pressure more and more : and the alleviation of that pressure will be a consideration well worth the attention of your Lordships. I will not longer trespass on your Lordships, but will conclude by giving my decided dissent to the third reading of the present bill.

The Earl of LIVERPOOL said, he differed widely from the noble Lord with respect to his calculations, that the bill would go to deduct more than 10 per cent. from the landed interest. Had he attentively perused the bill, his Lordship would see that many of the peculiar expences attached to land were allowed to be deducted previous to the operations of the bill taking effect. In short, that it would operate merely a little more than net landed income. The noble Earl laid much stress upon the effects of the additional salt duties—they certainly bore with additional weight on those parts of the country where cheese was manufactured—but was it not notorious that the maker repaid himself by the advanced price of his cheese ? A similar argument would apply in other cases where the produce of land became peculiarly liable to the effect of taxation.

He reverted to the noble Earl's recollection the large sums that were raised in the reigns of King William and Queen Ann, through the medium of landed property, respecting which the then proprietors made no particular complaint.

The Earl of Suffolk spoke shortly in explanation.

Lord HOLLAND rose.—When the present bill was brought up from the Commons, he should have attended in his place for the purpose of calling their Lordships' attention to it, and have attempted to persuade them, if not to reject it altogether, at least to grant some delay for its consideration. He should have hoped that their Lordships would have seen the impropriety of placing the large sum which this bill proposed to raise at the disposal of His Majesty's present advisers—that they would have manifested some of the ancient jealousy which belonged to the Constitution, and not have trusted ten millions more to those men who had already squandered sums that had added two hundred millions to our debt, without any permanent advantage to the country—but recollecting how fruitless were the endeavours of all those who had attempted to stem that profusion—not his endeavours, for that they should fail was not wonderful, but those of men who added to their efforts all the weight that talents and character could give—recollecting this, he had little reason to hope that even this much would be yielded. He had, however, said thus much, because he was anxious to shew that he had not altered any opinion he had formerly held on this subject: he was anxious that his real sentiments should be distinctly understood, lest it should be supposed that he reposed any confidence in His Majesty's Ministers, the whole of whose conduct had been injurious to the country, and who were only distinguished for their humiliation in the hour of distress, and their arrogance and ambition in the hour of prosperity.

In the course of what he had to say, he should take the liberty of referring to some arguments which had been used upon the second reading of the bill. The supporters of the measure had attempted to establish two different propositions: First, that the abstract principle of the bill was the first point to be discussed in that House; and next, that this principle had been admitted by the triple assent of last year. This doctrine of admission of principles *in limine*, without examination of the practicability or expediency of the measure, upon which the justness or fallacy of such principle must depend, seemed to him a kind of Parliamentary jargon, which, if it was not introduced with the design, had, at least, answered the purpose of keeping the real merit of the question out of sight. What was the meaning of the abstract principle of a tax bill? He

could see no advantage (nor, indeed, could he find a possibility of so doing) in deciding on the propriety of a nation raising her supplies within the year, without any circumstances given to judge of the expediency of such a measure, without any mode proposed, or materials granted for forming an opinion of the practicability of such a project : at best, it was a speculation for the political economist ; it could not be part of the duty of a Member of the Legislature. The principle could only be admitted, from a conviction of its expediency and practicability—the practicability could only be ascertained by an examination of the modes proposed for carrying it into execution, and the expediency only established by a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages likely to result from its adoption. If, upon an examination of the advantages and disadvantages likely to accrue, the latter were found to prevail, the bill ought to be rejected without any regard to its principle. It did not, however, appear, that what had been done last year was an admission of the principle ; it was true an experiment had been tried, but it had completely failed : but supposing the Legislature had admitted the principle, he hoped they were at liberty to change their opinions on that subject as their Lordships might have occasion to observe in the course of that debate, that persons of great financial knowledge might have very different notions, at different times, on subjects like the present.

He should now proceed to the consideration of the advantages and disadvantages which this scheme for raising ten millions within the year presented. He had no hesitation in saying that the disadvantages were so numerous and so palpable, that it appeared to him there could be no doubt as to the decision which their Lordships ought to make, which was to give it their negative. The arguments in favour of the measure, he believed, had been reduced to three, which were, first, That it prevented all idea of delusion with regard to our situation, and made the people understand at once, the nature and extent of the burden they had to bear. Second, That the country saved by raising the money at once, instead of raising it by loans, the interest, whatever it was. The third reason was rather more political than financial : it was that this proceeding was calculated to intimidate the enemy, who had placed their hope of our destruction on the increase of our debt.

With regard to the first of these arguments, the principle upon which it was founded met his sincerest approbation. He should be very happy to see any measure adopted to prevent the delusion of the people, but he must say, that if he were asked what was the greatest delusion that had marked the career of these delusive Mi-

nisters, he should state it to be, that measure which was now under the discussion of their Lordships. For certain reasons, whether right or wrong, Ministers had procured the repeal of the Assessed-tax Act passed last session; and from the preamble of the present bill, it should seem that this measure was intended as a substitute. The assessed taxes were intended to raise a certain sum for last year, and were pledged to the payment of eight millions raised by loan. Those eight millions were to be paid this year by that bill—but this substitute for that bill did not pretend to pay them this year, but deferred the payment of them, together with ten millions raised this year, till the end of the war. In passing this act, their Lordships ought not only to consider, whether it was practicable at the present moment, but whether its continuance all the time necessary for its operation, would be practicable: at present there were eight millions, for which the payment of the assessed taxes was to have been applied. There was also ten millions to be raised by the present bill; so that the total amount, as the account now stood, was eighteen millions, to be redeemed by the operation of this bill after the conclusion of peace: now the people might be led to conceive, that these eighteen millions would be paid off in, at least, two years after the termination of the war.

It was, however, easy to shew that this could not be the case. If ten millions were funded in the 3 per cents. during the war, and the price of stocks had been 50, it was evident, that the sum to be raised must increase in proportion as the stocks rose; for to redeem these ten millions, were the stocks at par, twenty millions would be necessary: the most sanguine calculator for peace could not assign less than two years for the continuance of the war; and if, during that time, ten millions was continued to be raised within the year, and ten millions by way of loan, it would be necessary that this tax should last five years after a peace. Now he would submit it to the consideration of their Lordships, whether they thought it possible that the people of this country were able to pay one-tenth of their income for the space of seven or eight years? He would recall to their attention the sum which was raised last year. He believed it amounted to about thirty-three millions. Now the taxable income of the country had been estimated at one hundred and ten millions. It therefore appeared, that the people of this country had already paid, independently of the tax which was now proposed, one-third of their income to Government. Did their Lordships imagine that the people could continue to do this long without being obliged to resort to their capital? And if they were once to draw upon their capital it needed no argument for him to shew how fatal the effects

of this tax would prove to the country. With regard to what he had said as to the payment of the debt, some of their Lordships would, perhaps, answer that argument by saying, that it would be easily paid off, if the funds should continue at their present price; but he believed this would not be much urged, as it was evident that the country would be in a wretched situation indeed if the funds did not rise upon a peace; and even in that supposition, at the end of two years, Parliament was pledged to pay off the Loyalty Loan at the choice of the holders; and were the stocks low, the holders would certainly call upon them.

He should illustrate his own sentiments on this subject, by referring to a book which was ascribed to a noble Lord (Lord Auckland's Letter to Lord Carlisle). The author, in putting the supposition of one-thirteenth of the income of the country being to be raised, either voluntary or by force, laid it down as a maxim, that such a tax could not take place without diminishing the capital of the country, which would prove very injurious to trade and agriculture—the superior ranks, he observed, would retrench their expences, which would cause a defalcation in the revenue, which must either be made up by taking from the sinking fund, or by fresh taxes.

He came now to consider the second advantage that was alledged to belong to the proposed tax. It was said that the nation would save in consequence of having no interest to pay upon the money which was raised for the public expenditure. It appeared to him, that when money was raised by loan, it was the capital, and not the interest, which was lost. It made, in his opinion, no essential difference, whether interest was paid or not, (to the wealth of the nation, though much in a political point of view,) as the great loss arose from the capital being taken from productive, and squandered in unproductive labour. But if borrowing was inexpedient for the Government, it was equally so for private persons; and this argument would apply in the present case; for nothing could be said to shew the difficulties of the Government in raising money, which might not be urged with regard to individuals.

He had heard an argument in favour of the measure of last year from a noble Lord (Liverpool), who, he was sorry to observe, had left the House. He had stated, that it was nothing more than taking the money out of one pocket and putting it into another. But let it be supposed, that a great part of the savings which might enable people to pay the present tax should be taken from consumption, what then would be the result? A reduction of the revenue must be expected to follow a diminution of consumption. But if

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they should pay the tax out of their capital, the evil, as he had already observed, would still be greater, as that would prove a reduction of the real strength of the country. It certainly was the operation of many taxes to take money out of one pocket, and put it into another; and if this effect was to be ascribed to the present, it was not unworthy of their Lordships' attention to consider from whose pockets it was to be taken, and into whose pockets it was to be put. Could their Lordships look coolly forward to the prospect of their posterity becoming titled beggars? Their property was easily known, and they could not, if they were inclined, evade the tax. Now, if it was true that this measure transported money from one pocket to another, it was evident that its object was to take from those that had wealth, and to give to those that had none. Nothing, however, was more clear, than that the tax, the tendency of which was to shift property, by impoverishing the Members of that House, would tend also to render them still more and more dependent on the Crown; and if their Lordships inherited the public spirit of their ancestors, they would not hesitate a moment in rejecting the bill on that score. As this measure must continue for many years, the whole weight of the tax must fall on those who should not be able to escape, in fact, on land-owners; or as the noble Lord, whose book he had quoted, expressed it, "on those who had ostensible possessions."

Among the many other disadvantages of the present tax was that of its inequality. It had, no doubt, been very justly observed by a noble Secretary of State, that in taxation, as well as every thing else, it was impossible to reach perfection; but the inequalities of this measure would be much more severely felt than those of any other tax, as it was more extensive. Inequalities in smaller taxes fell generally upon some particular branch of trade, from which it would often be contrived to shift the burden, at least a part of it; but the case was very different in the inequalities of a tax which affected the whole income of the country. For his part, if he thought it necessary to raise ten million by direct taxation, he should be of opinion that the sum had better be raised by ten different taxes than by one. It was true, indeed, that this mode of collection would prove expensive; but if this was a disadvantage which could not be avoided, it might be compensated by other advantages. The inequalities of each tax, in such a case, would fall on persons of different descriptions, and on none, therefore, very heavily; so that it might produce a sort of irregular equality—but not so with a great tax. The slightest inequality, then, was sufficient to ruin whole classes and descriptions of people; and as it must all fall on a

certain description of persons, must be more heavy in its operation, and more ruinous in its consequences—the evident tendency of this was to sweep away all the middle classes, and to annihilate the most valuable part of society. The injustice of the scheme was particularly striking in its making no distinction as to the different kinds of income which fell under its operation. He could not see upon what principle it was that a gradation should be made from 60*l.* up to 200*l.*, and that after the latter sum there should be no increase whatever, but that one-tenth should be alike taken from the man of 200*l.* and the man of 5,000*l.* a year. This was another proof of what he had already asserted, that it was the tendency of the tax to annihilate the middle classes. He was afraid that it would give too great an opportunity to the circulation of those calumnies which often represented some of their Lordships to act from the worst of motives. It might, perhaps, be said, that the lower and higher classes were sheltered from the tax, and thus a compromise was made with them to crush the middle. He heard it whispered, why do not the persons of the latter class petition against the bill? He was afraid that this circumstance might be easily accounted for, but by a consideration which was truly melancholy. There were comparatively few, he believed, in that situation of life, but had some dependence, either directly or indirectly, on the Minister: it was, therefore, not to be wondered at that scarce any public meetings had been held in opposition to the bill; but he had never seen any person of that class in society who did not state his sentiments to be hostile to the bill.

On the third argument in favour of the tax, much need not be said. He was far from thinking that the measure would have the effect upon the enemy which was expected from it: on the contrary, persevering in the funding system was much more likely to give them a great idea of our resources, because that system was not understood upon the Continent. Their ignorance of its nature made persons abroad magnify its effects, and they were inclined to consider it an inexhaustible source to which the British Government could always with confidence resort. It was, therefore, far from being good policy to declare to the world, that we had at last arrived at the end of the funding system.

There was one objection, which had been urged with much force against the bill in another place: he meant the evil arising from the disclosure of property. The book from which he had read so much, considered this as one of the greatest difficulties that would attend the carrying a tax upon income into effect. In this country there was certainly a very great reluctance to any measure that

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should lay open the situation of individuals, and in enforcing this their Lordships ought to recollect that they had not only the interests but the prejudices of the people to combat. He was not now arguing whether this general desire of concealment was right or wrong; it was sufficient for him that it existed. It was the business of a wise Legislature to consult the prejudices as well as the interests of a nation, and to be as careful that the former should not be violated, as that the latter should not be injured.

The disclosure of property was particularly dreaded by persons in trade, and some provisions had been made in their favour; but it was obvious that it might also prove very injurious to many other descriptions of persons. It might happen that a father should be very unwilling to have the state of his affairs made known to his son, lest the knowledge of the wealth he was to inherit might damp the efforts of the youth in the pursuits he might wish him to engage, and make him neglect to exercise his talents. It might also be very injurious to other men, that their circumstances should be completely disclosed to persons on whom they have a dependence. And it ought not to be overlooked, that in order to procure this disclosure of income, the horrid system of multiplying oaths was resorted to, in consequence of which that sacred bond upon which life and property depends, must become daily more and more loosened. At the same time son was set against father, and father against son. Nay, it even went so far as to bring forward, in spite of the uniform maxims of our law on that subject, the wife against her husband, as would be seen upon referring to the 41st clause in the act. Thus it appeared that every social tie was disregarded.

Could he get over these objections—could he be brought to concur in these preliminary injustices, he should, at least, say, let the arbitrary disclosure of property, and the imprudent multiplication of oaths, lead to an equal tax. The difficulty and cruelty of ascertaining the real value of a man's property instead of his income, would not be so great as the comparative advantage and equality of the tax upon all property. Much, in point of profit and quality, might be gained, and little lost, in point of justice and principle, *multum est in vota, in crimina parvum*.—Now nothing could be more unjust than the present scheme; according to which, the man whose property and income were as sixty to sixteen paid the same as he whose property and income were as sixteen to sixty: yet their Lordships had heard this praised as an equal mode of taxation. Indeed the inequalities of the tax were so glaring and so obvious, that it was almost unnecessary to say a word upon that part of the subject. It was ridiculous that

persons whose income was permanent, and descended to their heirs, should pay no more than those whose income arose from a profession or an annuity. As the tax applied to funded property after a dividend should be drawn, it was evidently a tax upon the stocks, and of course a violation of faith with the public creditor. It would certainly bear hard upon the funds in another way, and tend to lower them considerably. The reason of this was evident. The public funds were that description of personal property which was the least capable of being concealed; persons, therefore, who were anxious to evade this tax would sell out of the funds, and lay out their money in some other way. This was an effect that might very naturally be expected to take place. It was a silly argument to say, that the tax was not to extend to the funds, because the tenth of the dividend was not withheld in the payment, but only taken away when paid. This was like the story of the Golden Farmer. The man was allowed to have the money in his pocket, but was afterwards followed and knocked down for it. It reminded him of a transaction of the French Government, which, from his own knowledge, he knew to be true. Upon the conclusion of the treaty with Spain in 1794, it was stipulated by France, that all the Portuguese prisoners taken in the Spanish service should be returned to Spain. France fulfilled this article of the treaty, by sending the Portuguese prisoners to Barcelona; but on their voyage from thence to Lisbon, they were captured by a French ship of war. The prisoners remonstrated against being carried back to France, and stated, that they had just been set at liberty by the French Government. Their remonstrance, however, was answered with this observation—"We released you as *Spanish allies*; we now retake you as *Portuguese*."—This story he thought might serve hereafter to illustrate the faith of Government with respect to the funds. If he had no other objection to the bill than this violation of a public engagement, that alone would be a sufficient reason with him to oppose it. He concluded by declaring, that he gave the motion for the third reading his decided negative.

Lord AUCKLAND rose, and spoke as follows:—My Lords, the speech of the noble Baron (Lord Holland) would have compelled me, in justice to myself, to solicit your attention for a few minutes, even if I had not already intended to submit some observations on the measure now before us.

The noble Earl (Earl of Suffolk) who spoke first in the debate reminded me of his having expressed, in a former session, his wish, that the expence of every war might be principally sustained, during such war, by a fair and equal tax. I perfectly recollect the fact.

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And the noble Earl admits, with becoming candour, that he is not adverse to the present Bill : he is only dissatisfied with some of its provisions, the purport of which (I say it with all due deference) appears to me to be much misconceived by him.

The bill has not received, nor can I learn that it is likely to receive, opposition or objection from any other quarter. I accordingly feel myself warranted in asserting that, with the exception of the noble Baron's solitary negative, the measure in question has the concurrence of the House. And I firmly believe it to have, nearly in a similar proportion, the general assent of the kingdom.

But the noble Baron has been pleased so insinuate, that I cannot give my individual concurrence, as a Peer of Parliament, "without an inconsistency of reasoning and a change of system."

I feel it incumbent on me, my Lords, to repel such an insinuation, if it were meant to imply any versatility or dereliction of principle. The noble Lord has done me the honour to select and read certain passages from a small work which was published by me in the year 1779. [*Letters to the Earl of Carlisle from William Eden, Esq. See page 111 to page 118, in the 3d Edition.*] I might admit the full construction given by the noble Lord to those passages, and might answer, that, in the lapse of time, many speculative opinions (and personal opinions also) are liable fairly and honourably to be varied by events, by change of circumstances, by better information, and by more mature judgement. And surely, after an interval of twenty most eventful years, an opinion, of the kind alluded to, might be changed or abandoned without any cause of self-reproach. In the course of the next twenty years it may happen to the noble Lord (and I trust and hope, without implying any disrespect, that it will happen) to change some of his political opinions with much self-satisfaction, and with benefit to his country.

If, however, the noble Lord had adverted with his usual accuracy to the context of the passages which he thought proper to cite, he would have found that they related to a voluntary contribution to be dependant on the enthusiasm of the contributors; or if to a forced and general contribution, then to be dependant on a mere voluntary disclosure of income. At the period of which I speak, it never entered into the minds of the most enlightened statesmen (and I appeal to a noble and learned friend, the Lord Chancellor, who now hears me, and was conversant in the discussions to which I refer) that it could be practicable to establish a forced and general contribution on the only just and efficient system of a forced disclosure.

But I am not solicitous to avail myself of this explanation, even if I have been so fortunate as to satisfy your Lordships that it is solid and sufficient. I now freely confess, that in 1779 I did not foresee either the enthusiasm, or the prosperity and resources, which distinguish the actual epoch of our history above all others; and which have given to our countrymen both the disposition and ability to adopt the present measure, without any probable inconvenience sufficient to counterbalance the advantages to be obtained.

Your Lordships will permit me here to make one farther remark; and several of you can bear testimony to its truth. Whatever my opinion may be, it is not formed suddenly and for the purposes of the present day. It is an opinion which I publicly avowed and made known in the last session of Parliament. It then happened to me, and to others, in discussing the plan of the additional assessments, to state and admit its inequalities and imperfections (for they are not new discoveries). And we repeatedly added a wish for a measure somewhat similar to the bill now before us. I well remember to have described it as the *grand desideratum* in finance. But we at the same time expressed our fears that such a measure would be found impracticable.

It now appears that the difficulties, which we feared, were not insurmountable. The successful attempt to surmount them was well worthy of that great and energetic mind which directs our councils. It was well worthy of that mind, which seems to have been created, by a beneficent Providence, for the preservation of this kingdom—for the preservation of an adjoining kingdom, whose permanent prosperity and security (in despite of her ill-judged jealousies) we cordially seek to equalize with our own prosperity and security; and, perhaps, also for the restoration of Europe. Nothing inferior to the force of such a mind could have accomplished a project, which, in its actual effect and probable consequences, is of a nature so gigantic, that it is well calculated to rank with the other events of 1798. I annex no epithet to those events, for no language can do justice to their glory, or to their importance.

But if the adoption of this measure will be really so advantageous to the public, is it not (says one of the noble Lords) an admission that the system, which you have so long pursued, was wrong? Is it not an implied censure on that system? In other words, if the new system is so clearly the best, why was it not sooner brought forward? Perhaps it might be a sufficient answer, that till the funds began to be depressed by the accumulated weight of new loans, the expediency of raising a considerable part of the supply within the year was less evident and less urgent. But there was another

reason, paramount to all reasons. It was impossible, at an earlier period, to procure the adoption of the large and salutary plan now offered to us.

Our countrymen in general have been well and wisely disposed, during the whole of the tremendous struggle in which we are engaged, from its commencement to the present hour. Still, however, there were many, too many, among us, to whom the progress of the French Revolution, and the events of the war, had not yet developed the infernal views and tendency of Jacobinism, or the principles and practices of those, who, both secretly and openly, were supporting its cause.

It must be remembered that, in the first explosion of those crimes and calamities, which have since brought desolation on many nations, and extreme danger upon all, there were men (and Englishmen too) of leading and enlightened talents, who believed or affected to believe, and who persuaded themselves and others, that the French Revolution was the most glorious fabric of human integrity and wisdom; that it was the victory of eternal truth over prejudices; and that the atrocious acts of the revolutionists were only the first excesses and transient ebullitions of a new liberty, calculated to become the epoch and consummation of human happiness. The wretched delusion extended itself, and prevailed with much force, and with many perilous consequences, to the period of the Lisle negotiation: and even then, a great part of the nation was disposed to abandon the whole Continent of Europe to subjugation and destruction, and to make other ruinous sacrifices, in order to purchase a nominal peace, more fatal than any war.

When I look back to that period, I have all the painful sensations of a feverish and frightful dream.

Almighty God was pleased, for our preservation, to destroy our short-sighted hopes. The Lisle conferences were broken off in a manner which removed the film from the eyes of many. France avowed the inveterate design to destroy and extirpate the British empire! She proclaimed her design with ostentation, and made the most extravagant preparations to execute it. Every doubt now ceased, and it became most manifest, that a steady and vigorous prosecution of the war was indispensable to our existence as an independent people. In a crisis, so awfully interesting, the whole spirit and good sense of the nation burst forth. The militia, the yeomanry, the army, the navy, were all animated by the same zeal, and vied with each other in activity, promptitude, discipline, and bravery. The same enthusiasm warmed the heart of every Englishman in every part of the globe.

The wisdom of Parliament went hand in hand with the right disposition of the people ; and towards the close of 1797, brought forward the measure of the additional assessed taxes, which was accompanied by a voluntary contribution, promoted by all ranks with a generosity unexampled, and amounting at this hour to a sum little short of two millions sterling. Those exertions, which laid the foundation of the great system now under discussion, were farther aided by a War Tax (the Convoy Tax) on our imports and exports. And here I must digress for a moment to remark, that the amount of those imports and exports, by a most happy peculiarity in the seventh year of a war, was in 1798, so far as the accounts are completed, greater than ever. [See the Appendix, No. 1 and 2, at the end of his Lordship's Speech].

It was seen and acknowledged, that the measure of the additional assessments bore unequally, and that its inequalities affected those who came forward with public spirit, and who were incapable of evasions ; at the same time, that the comparative means of others, in many cases, evaded a fair contribution, and in many more were exempted from all charge. The measure nevertheless went forward, and with all its imperfections was of such evident utility, as to excite a general wish to improve and extend it.

It was highly encouraging to that extension to have observed, in the progress of the experiment, that the defalcations made from the incomes or capitals of individuals, had not occasioned any distress or embarrassment. On the contrary, there has been a general and progressive increase in the prosperity of the kingdom. Your Lordships will find ample proofs of this assertion in the comparative statements of our trade ; in the favourable course of exchange with the Continent ; in the net produce of the permanent revenue, which for the year ending the 5th of January 1798 was 17,960,000*l.* and for the year ending January 5, 1799, 21,049,000*l.* : but more especially in the net produce of the permanent taxes which existed antecedent to the war. That produce for the year ending the 5th of this month was 1,070,000*l.* higher than in the preceding year :—2,021,000*l.* higher than what I once stated in this House to have been the average produce of the three years ending the 5th of January 1796 : and 118,000*l.* higher than in the most productive year of peace, I mean the year ending the 5th of January 1793. In mentioning the exports, I ought to have remarked that the value of British manufactures, exported in 1798, so far as can be inferred from the amount of the three quarters ending the 10th of October, was considerably greater than ever.

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All these evidences of prosperity [*See the Appendix, No. 2. and 3. at the end of his Lordship's Speech*] are now much stronger than the statements and estimates which I submitted to your Lordships in May 1796. And yet those estimates were at the time attacked, and disputed, and opposed, as fanciful and extravagant; not indeed with much success, but certainly with much vehemence, both in speeches and publications. I may now be permitted to reply, with a reasonable exultation, that our actual prosperity (independently of the incalculable advantages to be derived from our late victories, and from the opening of new sources of commerce) far exceeds what I ventured, in 1796, to promise, or even to think probable.

The war supply, thus established, has been paid without a murmur. It has been accompanied by the astonishing successes, by which the year 1798 will be rendered ever memorable in history. Nor will the impression, estimation, and value, of those successes, be diminished by the assertion of the noble Baron, that "Two hundred millions have been squandered without attaining any permanent advantage."

That assertion, my Lords, provokes me to request your attention for a moment to the singular contrast exhibited by the enemy. Bankrupt in finance; ruined in manufactures; deprived of all commerce; baffled in all project of invasion; disgraced and defeated in every attempt to injure this country, which has been the peculiar object of hostility; groaning under the loss of large fleets and large armies; struggling against the hatred, and horror, and despair, of enslaved nations; and exposed to new hostilities from other states at last sensible of the general danger; France nevertheless continues to pursue her wild and wicked career! cheating one ally, extorting money from a second, and plundering a third, in order to collect means to invade a fourth, without provocation or pretext; fomenting and purchasing rebellions and revolutions; carrying or threatening devastation indiscriminately to republics and to monarchies; she still continues to set at defiance all the principles and duties of religion, and all the laws of nature and of nations. And this extremity of persevering wickedness is blended with a presumptuous rashness, and with a cold and calculating cruelty, beyond any example at which we have shuddered in the most degrading records of human depravity.

It is not easy in private life for the bravest man to defend himself against a mad and desperate ruffian. There is something analogous in the struggles between nations. Nor can there be a doubt that this country would have fallen, and would have involved in her ruin all the other existing governments, if our countrymen had

not been awakened to a timely sense of their danger, and if they had not been animated by a well-founded confidence in their own resources, and by a wise and characteristic courage. We feel and know that our only road to peace and security is by resistance and energy. We are driven, and we universally acknowledge, that we are driven to provide for another year, with the same vigour to which we owe our present safety and prosperity, and the unparalleled glory with which they are accompanied.

Happily we have means and resources still adequate to the trial; and it only remains to be considered, whether those resources can be brought into activity and effect better than by the measure now before us.

What then, my Lords, are the nature and objects of this measure?

Its leading principle, as in the measure of the last year, is, to raise a considerable portion of the supplies of the year within the year; and to liquidate, within a short time, what may be farther raised by loan.

The sum raised last year, by the different modes of what may be called a War Supply, will probably amount to about seven millions and a half. The sum estimated to be raised, towards the service of the present year, by this bill, and by the War Tax on imports and exports, is about twelve millions.

With these views, it is proposed to tax in equal proportions all the descriptions and classes of income, except those only which belong to the poor and labouring part of the community; and also except that small amount of income which may be presumed to furnish a mere subsistence.

The sum expected to be thus raised has been stated at ten millions, being the tenth of the calculated amount—[*See the Appendix, No. 4, at the end of his Lordship's speech*—] of that part of the national income, which is made liable to the proposed contribution. I have reason to believe, that this calculation is moderate, and that by a commendable caution it is given below the truth. I farther incline to think, that the general income of the class exempted from all contribution might be shewn to be, at least, as great as that part of the national income on which this bill will operate.

The plan has been introduced, framed, and completed, with every modification and indulgence compatible with its principle. Large allowances have been made to families and to individuals, in proportion to the number of their children, and by a scale highly favourable to incomes not exceeding 1,000*l.* upon the principle, that the expence of maintaining and educating children bears pro-

portionably more heavily on small incomes than it does on larger incomes. The rules for estimating the incomes of farmers, and lessees of land, and more especially of farmers under 300l. a year, have also been stated with most liberal modifications and abatements. And there appear in the bill many other indulgences, proceeding certainly from just and wise motives, but tending to diminish the estimated produce. Still, however, when we recollect that the additional assessments, with the voluntary contributions, are producing above six millions, it is not unreasonable to presume, that the measure now in question may produce ten millions.

The measure of the last session, by the nature of its operation, forced upon some only (and in that, as well as in other respects, it was partial) the necessity of declaring their incomes. The present measure requires from all, the statement of an income, not inferior to the income actually possessed and enjoyed; allowing, however, a veil of secrecy to be thrown over such statements in every case where the publication may be thought by the individual to be contrary to his commercial interests, it will result from these provisions, that the hoarders of income must now pay their full proportion for the protection which they enjoy. Nor will it any longer happen, that the conscientious contributor will pay his quota, or more than his quota, whilst the cold hearted and the fraudulent, with equal or greater means, pay little or nothing. In these respects, the system is now as just towards individuals as it will be found to be expedient with regard to the Public.

Keeping these several objects in view, the present bill appears to me to have been anxiously calculated, and ably and accurately framed to prevent inequality, fraud, embarrassment, and injury. And thus it is, my Lords, that we are accomplishing the best operation of finance, the practicability of obtaining by a national effort, to be made for a time only, without national inconvenience, any supply that the national exigencies may require.

That in a measure so extensive, unforeseen cases may occur, which may hereafter call for parliamentary interference, relief, or explanation, is probable, and more than probable. Undoubtedly many such cases may, and will, occur. On the other hand, occasions may arise in which it will be necessary to apply strict and more effectual provisions, to obviate unforeseen evasions and frauds.

I shall now, my Lords, take a summary view of the principal advantages to be derived from the vote which, I trust, we are about to give. Some of those advantages were entirely overlooked by

the noble Baron, and others seem to me to have been under-rated by him.

The consideration which first presents itself is that of economy. I will not fatigue your Lordships with minute calculations. But in comparing the prompt levy and payment of twenty millions, with the value of the annuity which must have been created, if Parliament had borrowed the same sum by loan, I am moderate in assuming, that such a loan could not have been obtained at a better price than 5*l.* for the 3 per cents., or at an interest of 6 per cent., which with the provision of 2 per cent. towards the redemption of the capital so created, would have amounted to a charge of 8 per cent., or 1,600,000*l.*

And here let me remark, incidentally, that 1,600,000*l.* a year must have been imposed in new and permanent taxes; to which might be added, the great expence of collecting. These considerations must not be overlooked in comparing the 10 per cent. upon income payable only for two years to produce the amount of the sum stated.

The 1,600,000*l.* a year so created for the interest and gradual extinction of the twenty millions so borrowed, or, in other words, for the extinction of forty millions capital 3 per cents., may be estimated to extinguish the whole, at the probable average price of the funds, in about forty years. What, then, is the present value of such an annuity for forty years? Your Lordships will find it to be about twenty years' purchase, taking the average interest of money at 4 per cent. And certainly, though, from the experience of this century, there have been wars during nearly sixteen years in every forty years, 4 per cent. may now be considered, under the actual prosperity and prospects of this country, as a fair average interest. The result then will be, that, instead of creating an annuity in taxes bearing heavily on the people in general, the value of which would be thirty-two millions, you raise twenty millions in two years and gain the difference.

But the farther resulting advantages are infinitely more important. It is not among the least of those advantages, that by the present plan the salutary effects of the sinking fund are greatly accelerated. The sums of different descriptions to be reserved and applied by the commissioners for the redemption of the national debt, will, in the first year of peace, be not less than fifteen millions, or nearly 50,000*l.* a day, for three hundred days in the year. The operation of such a sum, brought daily into the market to purchase stocks, which is to be extinguished, and not to return to the market,

cannot fail to have an effect in favour of public credit, as much beyond all calculation as it will be beyond all experience.

It is a farther consolation and encouragement under our actual exertions, that we are now approaching fast towards that period, when the original sinking fund will have reached its maximum; and when, by the addition of the 1 per cent. which has been appropriated for the gradual discharge of the capital in every loan of the present war, the permanent sinking fund will amount to eight millions sterling a year.

When I said, that the plan proposed will prevent the increase of permanent taxes, which otherwise must have been levied on articles of consumption, I ought to have added, that by avoiding such an addition to the permanent taxes, we accelerate our arrival at the period when a part of the taxes already subsisting may be abolished.

But the advantages of the measure are not confined to the question of economy, however important; nor to the operations of the sinking fund, however salutary; nor to the avoiding of new taxes, however desirable to the people at large; nor to the maintenance of our public credit, however essential to our prosperity: they are calculated to demonstrate to our enemies, and to the world at large, that we possess inexhaustible resources, together with the disposition to use them; and that we are determined to assert and to secure that proud position which we hold, and which, I trust, we shall long continue to hold, among nations.

I shall now avail myself of your Lordships' indulgence, to take a short notice of the principal objections to which this bill has been thought liable.

It has been said by the noble Baron, and has been suggested to me by others, for whose opinions also I feel a sincere respect, that the bill having exempted all incomes below 60*l.*, and having imposed the payment in a progressive scale, from 60*l.* to 200*l.*, the principle of gradual rise is admitted, and ought to have been pursued through all the higher classes of income. I contend, with all due deference, that such a rise would be contrary to all the safety and rights of property; that it is worthy only of the French Council of Five Hundred, and consequently would be disgraceful to a British Parliament; and that it would amount to neither more nor less than the introduction of a plan for equalizing fortunes; and to the implied inference, that because a man possesses much, therefore more shall be taken from him than is proportionably taken from others.

Nor, when the matter is fairly considered, is there any incon-

sistency in the exemption given to incomes below 60*l.* That exemption is only a liberal construction and exercise of the principle, that, in levying a tax upon income, we ought not to extend it to incomes which may be necessary to actual subsistence; and having established that point at 60*l.* a year, there must be some gradations beyond it, in order to arrive at the one-tenth:—otherwise, it would happen, that the man of 65*l.* a year would, by the payment of 6*l.* 10*s.* become poorer than the man of 60*l.* a year, and so in proportion in advancing higher.

Perhaps it might have been more strictly conformable to the proposed system, to have confined the scale within 100*l.* a year. But I give no opinion contrary to the more liberal sentiment which has been exercised by the framers of the bill. I am only solicitous to establish the consistency of the principle, by which the inequalities of income remain as they were found; and by which the privations of the year bear, within the year, in an equal proportion upon all.

The notion of requiring a higher proportion from the higher classes, exclusive of its levelling tendency, would imply, that in all taxes upon consumption also, every individual should be rated in proportion to his income; and that when a man of 400*l.* a year pays a duty of five shillings for a bushel of salt, or for any given quantity of tea or wine, the possessor of 4,000*l.* a year ought to pay fifty shillings. It is no answer to this, that the use of such articles is, in some degree, voluntary. Happily, such a system, which certainly would be unjust and most mischievous, is as certainly impracticable.

There is another objection, which is equally unsound, though more plausible. We are told, that one species of income is more valuable than another; and therefore, as a fair price for its protection, that it ought to pay in proportion to its value: for example; that an annuity for life being worth only ten years purchase, and an income resulting from an estate in fee being worth thirty years purchase, the latter ought to pay three times as much as the former.

I confess that, for a moment, and when this notion first occurred in the debates of the last session, I conceived it to have some solidity; but a little reflection will shew, that the whole difficulty arises from a confusion in terms, and from blending together the ideas of income and of capital. Income, as income, cannot be distinguished, and brought into a scale of taxation, whatever may be the nature and value of the fund from which it is derived. The moment that income is rated by its value in the market, it

ceases to have the properties of income, and becomes capital. And then a new question presents itself:—will you impose your contribution upon capital? I conceive that a tax on capital would be unattainable. How would it be possible to value the different estates of the owners and occupiers of land, and all the different modifications, conditions, settlements, remainders, and reversions, to which real property is liable? Still more, at how many years purchase, and by what rules, will you value the varying incomes of artists, manufacturers, and mercantile and professional men? They are in the nature of incomes, for life or for years, and generally with the advantage of being in a course of increase and improvement. It is true that they are subject to innumerable accidents and changes; but they cannot be distinguished in their average from other annuities, no more than those annuities can be distinguished from incomes which are nominally for ever.

Will it be contended, that, in point of real value, an unsettled estate, which its owner will leave to his children, is of more worth to him, than if the same estate were for his life only, and already settled on his son and his descendants? Would an estate so settled on him for life with remainder to his heirs male, be more valuable to him than it would be, if he had no son, and it were settled on some distant relation or on a stranger? And if on a stranger, how is it more valuable to the possessor than any other annuity for life? The income arising from commerce or a profession becomes, on the retreat or demise of its present owner, the property of another, just as much as the income arising from an estate or from an annuity for life or years. In short, we cannot look to income, as liable to a different valuation in every specific case; nor as a property fairly to be deemed an object of taxation, with a reference to a longer interest than the life of its possessor:

Tanquam

Sit proprium cui-quam, puncto quod mobilis horæ

Nunc prece, nunc pretio, nunc vi, nunc sorte supremâ,

Permutet dominos et cedat in altera jura.

And therefore it is, that by this bill, in all cases indiscriminately (and if it were not indiscriminately it would be unjustly) the accruing income of the year is made liable, for the year, to a deduction in a rated proportion which equally affects all.

Such then, my Lords, is the plan before us; establishing a system of supply, essentially important in the present struggle, essentially beneficial on the eventual return of peace, and such as will

hereafter induce all nations to pause, before they bring upon us the necessity of engaging in war with them.

I must once more repeat, my Lords, that this measure has been accomplished by the union of opinions respecting the nature of the French hostility ; by the affectionate and grateful attachment which is felt by all for a Sovereign who is justly considered as the father of his people ; and by the confidence which is reposed in the Councils of that Sovereign, and in the wisdom of Parliament ; or in other words, by the general conviction of men's minds, under which (as a noble Marquis pointedly expressed himself on the first day of the session) " all opposition is dead and buried." I may add without any want of candour, that the public opinion is unequivocally marked, when public men, in a period of unexampled anxiety, can retire into obscurity without exciting, in a great and enlightened empire, even a whisper of public regret.

My Lords, I have repeatedly stood in this place, during the last five years, a foreboder of increasing difficulties and dangers ; nor shall I ever be disposed to flatter either your Lordships or myself, or the country at large. But I now look forwards and with good hopes to the cheering approach of better prospects. And at this hour, if we could consider ourselves merely as a maritime state, singly opposed to France and to the naval powers who are so unfortunate as to be compelled to act with France, and to submit to be called her allies, the contest would be at an end. For what object of contest could there be between naval antagonists ; the one of which has lost to the other, all its commerce, all its colonies, all its external possessions, all its seas, and nearly all its fleets ; a loss including, when the Spanish and Dutch prizes are added to the list, above three score ships of the line, and more than double that number of frigates ? I cannot hesitate to say that a naval power, so circumstanced, and so blocked up in all its coasts and ports, is defeated and beaten. Her inhabitants may collect in crowds upon the shore, and call hard names, and use opprobrious language ; but they are beaten, and have ceased to be a maritime people for a long period of time. So far as our insular interests are in question, the war is brought to a predicament, in which a man may place his maps before him, and rack his information and ingenuity to find new objects of conquest and acquisition.

But in stating this, let me not be understood to give, or to convey, any opinion relative, either to the weakness or stability of the monstrous government which has established itself in France. It would be presumption to say what may be the permanence of a

power, which seizes and appropriates, without scruple or remorse, the resources of other nations. No man can foretell how long a lawless horde of robbers and murderers may subsist by pillage and by crimes, before they are overtaken by human or divine justice. But one truth at least is obvious and certain. So long as the French leaders shall appear to have no means of existence, but in prolonging the miseries and calamities which they have caused; and whilst they retain the appetite and power of mischief and destruction; it would be madness and folly, on our part, to suppose that we can revert in safety to the blessings of peace. We ought not to hope for peace so long as the revolutionizing system maintains its activity. That activity is still exerting itself, with all the agonies of fatigued but insatiate malignity, and amidst scenes of depopulation, bankruptcy, discontent and revolt.

So far as the mere safety of these islands is in question, we are safe in our own courage and resources. But in looking towards the wished-for period of pacification, we must never forget, that the security of Europe is essential to the security of the British empire. We cannot separate them.

Permit me, my Lords, before I sit down, to advert to a circumstance, which, if left unexplained, might subject me to the imputation of speaking with an illiberal warmth and prejudice. On the present and on other occasions, I have used harsh language respecting the French as a nation: and surely they have been, during nine years, the most detestable people that ever disgraced the globe on which we live, and breathe, and have our being. They have been, and still continue to be, the scourge and pest of afflicted humanity. But I wish, once for all, to be understood not to speak of the French such as I saw and knew them twelve years ago; nor of the French such as I hope, one day, again to see them. I speak of them as they are, a credulous, subjugated, irreligious, immoral, and cruel people; blind instruments of the corruptions, caprices, and crimes of a few desperate regicides. I speak of them as they are, and will continue so to speak of them on every occasion that may present itself; because I feel and know, that we cannot be too often and too strongly impressed with a true opinion of our enemy, and with a true sense of our danger.

But, God forbid that I should apply such expressions to the nation which I saw, composed of a brave and generous nobility, and a good-tempered and ingenious people; even then, however, following false lights, and tending towards the precipice down which they have since fallen. It is among the bitter misfortunes of that nobility, and of the other respectable classes, forced into exile and

laden with distresses of many kinds, to feel ashamed of the country which gave them birth, and to carry about with them the sentiment, that the very name of a Frenchman will, for ages to come, sound gratingly to the ears of Mankind. The contrast, my Lords, is obvious and offers itself to our attention. I see it with complacency and with pride. It is a pardonable pride, and of a good and moral tendency. Englishmen derive from their consciousness of being Englishmen, an elevation of mind, which, both to the present race and to posterity, will operate as an incessant encouragement to national virtue and to right exertions. *Vera gloria radices agit, atque etiam propagatur.*

APPENDIX, referred to by Lord AUCKLAND in
the course of his speech.

No. 1.

An ACCOUNT of the Total Value of the IMPORTS into and
EXPORTS from GREAT BRITAIN in the following Years,
viz.

Years.	Value of Imports.	Value of British Merchandize exported.	Value of foreign Merchandize exported.	Total Value of British and Fo- reign Merchan- dize exported.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
1790	19,130,886	14,921,084	5,199,037	20,120,121
1791	19,669,782	16,810,020	5,921,976	22,731,996
1792	19,659,358	18,336,851	6,568,348	24,905,200
1793	18,696,593	13,892,268	6,497,911	20,390,179
1794	22,288,894	16,725,402	10,023,564	26,748,966
1795	21,859,256	16,527,213	10,785,125	27,312,327
1796	22,749,476	19,102,220	11,416,693	30,518,913
1797	21,013,596	17,268,807	11,948,234	29,217,041
1798*	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -

* This account cannot yet be made up to a later period than to the 10th of October. But it appears that the amount of the value of British and foreign merchandize exported from England, in the three first quarters, ending on that day, was 22,977,000l.

No. 2.

Comparative Value of certain principal Articles of British Manufactures exported from England in the Three Quarters, ending the 10th October, 1797, and the 10th October, 1798.

	Three Quarters ending Oct. 10, 1797.	Three Quarters ending Oct. 10, 1798
	£.	£.
Cottons - - - - -	1,583,000	1,725,000
Iron, wrought - - - - -	631,000	678,000
Linens - - - - -	493,000	880,000
Woollen goods - - - - -	3,977,000	4,978,000

Total comparative Value of British Manufactures and Foreign Merchandize exported from England in the Three Quarters as above.

	Three Quarters ending Oct. 10, 1797.	Three Quarters ending Oct. 10, 1798.
	£.	£.
Total British Manufactures exported from England - - - - - }	12,034,000	13,285,000
Total Foreign Merchandize exported from England - - - - - }	8,654,000	9,692,000
	£.20,688,000	22,977,000

No. 3.

Amount of the permanent taxes, on a three-years average, to the 5th of January, 1784	— — —	£. 9,876,000
Amount of the same, as estimated by the Committee on a three-years average to the 5th of January, 1791	— — — —	13,472,000
Amount for the year ending the 5th of January, 1793		14,284,000

Amount of the same taxes, after making all allowances for the intermediate changes and arrange- ments of the revenue, on a three-years ave- rage, to the 5th of January, 1796	—	12,381,000
Amount of the same, on the average of five years war, to the 5th of January, 1798	— —	13,806,000
Amount of the same, for the year ending the 5th of Ja- nuary, 1798	— — —	13,332,000
Amount of the same, for the year ending the 5th of Ja- nuary, 1799 *	— — —	14,402,000

* Part of this comparative increase undoubtedly arises from particular branches of the revenue having been depressed in the preceding year by circumstances which have now nearly ceased to operate: such as the duties on wine, &c. At the same time the actual payment of so large an increase, from whatever cause it proceeds, is an undoubted proof of the resources and sufficiency of the country under all its burdens.

No. 4.

COMPUTATION OF INCOME.

	Annual Income £.	Deduction for Part under 6ol. which will pay nothing, and Part under 2ool. which will pay on Average $\frac{1}{3}$ £.	Taxable Income. £.
Landlords' Rents, 40,000,000 cultivated acres, estimated at 12s. 6d. } per acre — — — — —	25,000,000	$\frac{1}{3}$ — 5,000,000	20,000,000
Tenants' Rents at 3-4ths — — — — —	19,000,000	$\frac{2}{3}$ — 13,000,000	6,000,000
Tithes — — — — —	5,000,000	$\frac{1}{3}$ — 1,000,000	4,000,000
Mines, navigation, and timber — — — — —	3,000,000	— — — — —	3,000,000
Houses — — — — —	6,000,000	$\frac{1}{6}$ — 1,000,000	5,000,000
Rents on inhabited houses, 4,500,000 — — — — —	2,000,000	— — — — —	2,000,000
Professions — — — — —	5,000,000	— — — — —	5,000,000
Scotland 1-8th of England — — — — —	5,000,000	— — — — —	5,000,000
Income from possessions beyond sea — — — — —	15,000,000	$\frac{1}{3}$ — 3,000,000	12,000,000
Interest on funds, after deducting sums issued to Commissioners, as sinking fund and interest of capital redeemed — — — — —	12,000,000	— — — — —	12,000,000
Profit on foreign trade, suppose 1s. per ct. on 80,000,000l. capital insured Ditto, home trade at 1s. per ct. — — — — —	18,000,000	— — — — —	28,000,000
Other trade — — — — —	10,000,000	— — — — —	102,300,000
	125,000,000	25,000,000	

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Lord CLIFFORD (Earl of Darnley in Ireland) apologized for troubling the House after the very able speech which had been delivered in support of the bill by the noble Lord who spoke last, but so fully convinced was he of its propriety, that he could not lose the present opportunity of joining his voice in favour of the measure to that of both Houses of Parliament, and of the country at large. Though his noble friend had entered into a great variety of topics suggested by the consideration of the proposed tax, two or three points had escaped his notice, to which he felt himself called upon to speak. Among the objections made by a noble Lord (Lord Holland) to the bill, was one in particular, that it went to a disclosure of the circumstances of the parties. Had the noble Lord carefully perused the whole of the bill, he would have found, that the objection so advanced did not apply to the landed interest, and that commercial property was as completely guarded from any dangers likely to result from a disclosure, as the nature of the case could possibly admit of. It should also be remembered, that the bill had not been hurried through in the way imputed to it, but had undergone the most serious and minute investigation. He would undertake to say, that the previous investigation had been so strict, as to render it at present unnecessary to go into a detail of those objections which had been fully refuted in the other House. With respect to the probability which had been urged of the measure affecting the funds, he would ask, if it were likely to do so, why that effect had not been already produced? The noble Lord had declared, that he was averse to abstract propositions on political subjects, yet, after making that declaration, he made no difficulty of reading extracts from a work of the very nature he condemned. Lord Darnley concluded with observing, that the present measure was one which their Lordships were called upon by the most powerful motives to sanction, as, exclusively of the great and salutary principle on which it proceeded, it was also calculated in every point of view to defeat the designs, and ruin the power of the enemy.

Lord HOLLAND rose to explain. He was perfectly sensible that any discussion he was able to promote would be wholly without effect: but his duty, however, called upon him to state the objections he had urged against the measure. With regard to the observations he had made on the work of a noble Lord (Auckland), he could assure that noble Lord that he by no means quoted the book with an intention to throw any slur upon its author, but, on the contrary, to strengthen his argument by what he conceived to be a weighty and respectable authority. He could not, however, refrain from animadverting upon the manner in which his arguments against

the bill had been treated : instead of urging any sound arguments in reply to them, he was only told that his opposition was a solitary one, and that the general sense of the House was against him ; he was moreover given to understand that no ambition was felt to convince him, or to conciliate his approbation of the measure. This surely was rather a strange way of treating a Member of that House, who was placed in it by the Constitution in order to deliver his opinion upon every topick according to his conscience and the best of his judgement. Had he made use of such unparliamentary language, he, no doubt, would have been accused of libelling the House. The noble Lord (Auckland) had also been pleased to express a hope that age and experience might teach him to alter his opinions, as the noble Lord himself had done. He would not say that he felt disposed to imitate the example of the noble Lord in that respect, who had so egregiously changed his opinions both of men and measures ; but, whenever he was induced to alter his political sentiments, he trusted the change would be the result of fair investigation and unbiassed judgement, and that it should be the work of his reason as far as it could guide him, not the suggestion of private interest or prejudiced partiality. It might be natural for the noble Lord to have made some change in his opinions on a subject like the present after the lapse of twenty years, nor could a fair construction of the words he quoted vindicate him from the imputation of that charge. The words of the book were not confined to voluntary contributions. They also admitted the impropriety of a disclosure of private circumstances, and likewise the hardships to which a measure like the present would expose the landholder. The noble Lord is loud in the praise of the spirit and enthusiasm of the country manifested in the voluntary contributions and the payment of the triple assessment of last year, yet unfortunately this panegyric is broadly denied by the bill now before the House, the preamble of which tells the world, that the reason for introducing it was the shameful evasions practised last year. The noble Lord had also brought forward observations not very closely connected with the subject, but such as the Ministers and their adherents knew well how to introduce into every debate. To prepare their Lordships' minds for the adoption of their unconstitutional measures, some rant upon French atrocities must always be introduced. If he told them the bill was unjust, he was answered by the tyranny of the Directory ; if he told them it was unequal and impolitic, they must hear a philippic against Jacobinism. The noble Lord observed upon some expressions which were made use of in another place, where the French Revolution was stiled a glorious fabric of

wisdom and integrity. He did not take up this with a view of blaming or defending it: he was seldom tempted to defend a man who was so much better able to defend himself. His intention only was to say, that if from a measure well intended evil consequences might afterwards arise, this could not be fairly imputed as a fault to the framers of the measure. If it were our notions of human guilt, all distinctions between right and wrong were at an end, and the extension of the principle might lead us to the condemnation of all that was noble, honest, or disinterested. Would it be just to impute to the manly opposition of Hampden, the fatal catastrophe that afterwards ensued? If the Admiralty embarked in some great expedition, which afterwards terminated in some great calamity, would it be fair to impute the failure to the noble Lord, who so ably superintends that department, and about the integrity of whose intentions no man could entertain a doubt? Where there was no evil intention, there could, therefore, be no fault; and here he would not hesitate to say, that had he been a Frenchman, he would have felt it the pride of his life to have been concerned in that great event; but, though he felt that such would have been his ambition in such a situation of his country as that of France then was, he was far from thinking that there could be any justice in making him answerable for the consequences that might ensue. Would their Lordships now contend, that even His Majesty's Ministers, whom they have so generally supported, should be made responsible for all the disastrous consequences of the war into which they have unfortunately plunged the nation? Surely not; and ill and inauspiciously as the war has actually been prosecuted, God forbid that he should say, that Ministers should be made responsible for all the moral guilt of its concomitant calamities. Indeed, the first avowed object of the war was to resist the unprovoked aggression of the French, and to frustrate their schemes of aggrandizement; would Ministers have persisted in embarking in it, were they told all that has since ensued from it; had they been told that France would be in possession of all Italy; that she would exert a commanding influence over Spain; that she would invade Holland, and make herself master of all its resources: but especially had they been told, that England should be obliged to send Ministers to negotiate with those very men, whose hands were still reeking with the blood of their Sovereign, or that we who haughtily refused an asylum to any, directly or indirectly, concerned in the King's murder, should be now expressing an anxiety for the only man in the Directory who had a hand in that atrocious deed? For his part he was, and he trusted he should ever be, a sincere and firm friend of

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Liberty, and as such he must feel with keener regret, and deeper horror at the crimes and atrocities that might be committed in her name, than those who never were conscious of any fervour in her cause. Under such impressions, it could not, therefore, be supposed, that he was inclined to extenuate, much less to palliate or justify these atrocities. But he could not help remarking, that the only object of the war that seemed to be accomplished, (for he could not doubt but that such an object had been in view) was the rendering the name of liberty odious to the world, in which France has but too ably conspired, as we unfortunately see from the pernicious and abominable consequences that have flowed from some of her systems. But great and shocking as most undoubtedly is the guilt of the French, yet the effect of the war has as yet been the direct contrary of its avowed object; it has extended the dominions and contributed to the aggrandizement of the enemy. He would not have been induced to say much on this subject, had he not observed with what triumph the crimes of France and the deplorable effects of Jacobinism are every moment introduced, even to prove the propriety and necessity of a tax bill. The noble Lord has also thought proper to enter into a comparison of this country with France. In some points of view, no doubt this was a subject of exultation. The fleets of France had disappeared. France could no longer be regarded as a naval power. Her inhabitants could now only stand on their shores, and vent the impotence of their rage in calling us hard names, though not harder, perhaps, than had been called here in the House of Lords, where some persons might be characterized as being as abject in disgrace, as they were loud and arrogant in prosperity. The noble Lord was also pleased to tell him, that he could find no inaccuracies in the bill. This was not the case; on the contrary, he could shew it to be exceedingly inaccurate, which he then did by adverting to a variety of clauses. He was told besides, that the present measure was particularly calculated to raise the funds. But if the usual mode of raising money by loan was to be abandoned, much of the necessity for keeping up the funds existed no longer. For his part, he principally maintained that the tax, by being continued for any length of time, would produce the worst consequences, and that it would be impossible for the people to bear it. He felt it, therefore, his duty to continue his opposition to a measure, which he was confident must be finally productive of such melancholy effects.

Lord GRENVILLE said, that after the able arguments which the House had heard from his noble friend (Lord Auckland), in support of the bill, it might perhaps be supposed that there was no

necessity for his troubling them with his sentiments upon the subject. It was not his intention to have done so, had it not been for the extraordinary conduct of the noble Lord who had just sat down. He believed their Lordships would agree with him that the noble Lord was the first person who had set the example of rising a second time in that House, not for the purpose of explanation, but of re-discussing the question before them in a regular and detailed speech. He had, however, preserved silence hitherto respecting the usual practice of the noble Lord, nor would he have noticed it even on the present occasion, had he not heard some very improper reflections cast upon the conduct of the House. He was not in the habit of precluding the Members of that House from the most ample indulgence in the delivery of their sentiments, by rigorously enforcing the standing orders. But when he found them so frequently and systematically violated, he thought it highly necessary to call the attention of the House to their strict execution—*moribus antiquis stat Roma*. The noble Lord, besides, by his observations on the supposed conduct of Ministers under certain circumstances, seemed to intend to call upon him personally; and, however unwilling he was to occupy their Lordships' time on a subject not immediately connected with the question before them, he should be sorry if it were for a moment thought that His Majesty's Ministers would have acted under those supposed circumstances in the manner represented. The sentiments of a certain person upon the French Revolution had been alluded to, and his Lordship had expressed his coincidence in those sentiments. This was a subject which he could not imagine to be introduced for any other purpose than that of calling away the attention of the House from the unanswerable arguments of his noble friend. As it had, however, been introduced, he would again state the opinion which he had uniformly professed respecting it from its commencement to the present moment. He had always considered the Constitution of 1791, which some men had so loudly extolled, as a wretched, weak, and flimsy production in itself, but at the same time as very artfully contrived to effect the wicked and abominable purposes of the deep tragedy which it ushered in. It was not the present stage only of the French Revolution, which no man could contemplate without horror, that he considered as deserving the execration of every friend to humanity; but through all its stages, which had been so copiously drenched with torrents of blood, he had always viewed it as a scene of unparalleled atrocity, madness, and delusion. He was asked, whether if His Majesty's Ministers had foreseen the present posture of affairs, and had known that the course of events would have led to the extension of the

dominion of France, they would have advised His Majesty to commence hostilities against the Government of that country? He would for himself repeat it a hundred times over, that had he been perfectly assured beforehand of all the events which had happened, the subjugation and pillage of Italy, the conquest of Holland, or even the murder of the King of France, he would have recommended the adoption of the same system which this country had pursued, and which he should consider as deriving additional urgency from those very circumstances. Nay, when he reflected on the ravages committed in the whole civilized community of the world by that wild and wicked domination; by a Revolution which no man could think of, much more approach in discussion, without horror; when he beheld the face of Europe distorted to every feature, disfigured with the blood of Kings, or the violation of personal liberty and personal rights, what must be his feelings, what his indignation at the authors of so many crimes, and such a complication of black and hideous mischief? Was not Italy polluted? Was not Switzerland plundered, sacked, enslaved, the scene of general devastation and of massacre? These things had all happened in their succession; yet could he have foreseen that such would be the issue of that monstrous Revolution, those, aye, ten times more, he would have sacrificed to stem the tide of those vicious and false principles, to keep out from the human mind that glare of delusive light, fantastically called philosophy, but which, in truth, was no other than the inflammable effusion of revolutionary madness. This country had honourably, and, thank God, as yet successfully resisted that power which sought not only to overthrow every State in its vicinity, but our own. And, (concluded the noble Secretary) we shall continue our exertions; we shall ardently maintain the struggle; we shall give to Europe the awful but animating example of a nation combating irreligion, injustice, oppression, tyranny; and not for ourselves alone, but for the world.

Lord HOLLAND said, he had not so much spoken against the measures themselves, as he had animadverted upon the inefficacy of those measures which His Majesty's Ministers had pursued.

Earl of FAUCONBERG in general terms approved of the measure; he gave it as his opinion, that the thanks of the country were due to Government for having had the wisdom, the justice, and the firmness to bring forward, at a period eminently portentous, a measure of finance which was to convince the enemy that our resources were equal to our necessities, and that the spirit of the nation, far from being repressed by it, will, under its influence, be

stimulated to higher enterprize, and raised to a higher pitch of force than ever it essayed or attained in any known period of our history. He should therefore most cordially support the bill.

The Duke of BEDFORD rose, and begged their Lordships' indulgence while he stated his sentiments on a bill which he thought of the last degree of importance to all the various interests of the country. In stating his sentiments, however, he would trespass as short a time as possible on the time of the House.

The bill turned upon two great and leading principles, besides comprehending a large variety of other subordinate points and considerations. The first of the two principles was, how far it was wise and expedient to raise a great portion of the supplies within the year, rather than by the usual way of loan? It was impossible to discuss this principle by arguments drawn from experience or comparative effect, because it was a mere speculative question, and therefore could not be treated in the same manner as that which had stood the test of trial in repeated instances ever since the establishment of the funding system. There was, however, the constant and uniform practice of our ancestors against it; nay more, there was the practice of the present Minister himself, who had, during five years of expensive war—for he would not call it ruinous, or use any expression that might lead to the discussion of subjects that had been again and again agitated within those walls—But during five years of expensive war, the present Minister had himself followed the ancient plan of raising the supplies by loans; and, inasmuch as that amounted to, it was to be taken into consideration, as warranting the inference that the present Minister had hitherto thought that mode of raising the supplies preferable to an attempt to raise them within the year. If, then, we were now to adopt the mode recommended by this bill, it would be an admission that the author of it had been for that space of time in the wrong, and that the present was preferable to that which he had hitherto pursued. No noble Lord, he believed, would support it as positively good; but would merely argue for it as expedient, and adapted to our present circumstances:—but yet his Grace thought it would not be difficult to prove that, even comparatively, it was a more injurious mode of raising the supplies than that which had been so long pursued. In the outset of a war, indeed, the noble Duke admitted that this method might have one good effect, it might make a people cautious how they plunged themselves giddily and without due consideration into war. But, whether being actually engaged in war—whether, after having in five years created a debt greater in its amount than the whole of what had been incurred during the hundred years pre-

ceding, we should adopt this mode now? was a question of extreme doubt. The second principle of the bill for their Lordships' discussion was, Whether, if the propriety of raising a great part of the supplies within the year were admitted, the proposition now offered of raising those supplies by a tax on income was the desirable means? This was a question of material importance in the view in which the measures of the last year were considered; for, as by raising 7,000.000l. within the year, it was contended that the general principle of raising the supplies within the year was recognised, it might hereafter be contended that, by adopting the present bill, they recognised the principle of taxing income. In this view it required their Lordships' most serious consideration; for nothing could be more injurious to the Community, nor more fatal to the State, than to assume this as a principle recognised, and to act upon it. It had been the general practice of taxation, to levy as great a portion as possible of the sum wanted upon articles of luxury and of consumption; and, so long as that practice could be continued, it would never be considered as materially unjust in its operation, though one description might for the moment be more immediately touched than others; and although the whole community might not pay towards it in equal proportions, still, as it was optional, it could not be deemed fundamentally wrong. If, therefore, it was abandoned, it was a confession that we could not go on in the most equitable course of taxation; for on no other ground could that course be abandoned, but that the taxes would be so oppressive that people, in order to avoid them, would disuse the articles taxed. This, then, must be considered as a forced contribution; and as such it would be considered. If the sum could be raised by a tax on consumption, every body must acknowledge that it would be a preferable mode. But if the state of the realm was such that a forced contribution must be the means of supporting the Government, then it became their Lordships to consider well, whether the general principle of taxation, which required that every man should pay in proportion to the protection he received, which protection was commensurate with his property, was consulted and acted upon in this bill. In his mind the criterion was extremely false and erroneous. In one case it would be a tax, as it professed to be, upon income; in another, it would be a tax upon capital. A temporary tax upon income must in its nature be, in many instances, a tax upon capital. The present tax was said to be for three years. Thus, then, a person possessed of 1,000l. a year, and expending the whole of it, cannot, said his Grace, without considerable inconvenience to himself, abridge his expenditure to 900l.; whereas, by taking from

his capital 100l., he will diminish his income but 5l. a year for each year, and with comparatively a trifling inconvenience, he will be thus enabled to pay his tax. Persons, on the other hand, who possess greater incomes than they annually expend, convert their surplus into capital. In both cases, therefore, the tax, in truth, takes from their capital, and not from their income. Yet possessing this clear character of being, in most instances, a tax upon capital, it would not be difficult to shew how unequal it would be in its operation; for if the annuitant is obliged to have recourse to his capital, you take from him a fiftieth part of his property, as the average value of existing annuities cannot be said to be more than five years purchase. You take from the stockholder little more than a two hundredth part, and from the land-owner only a three-hundredth part. This may be sufficient to shew its inequality; but, perhaps, it will be more clearly illustrated in the situation of a person having property in the short annuities, compared with that of another who has invested the same sum in the 3 per cents.

Two persons have invested the same sum in the same security, that is, in the public funds, and consequently with the faith of Government equally pledged to them. The one receives an income for his money of 200l. a year; the other receives about 75l.; yet relatively both these persons receive the same value for their money according to the funds they have chosen; for, in the one case, the public repay, as it were, the principal, together with interest upon it, by instalments, because in nine years the whole is to terminate: whereas, in the other case, the public pay only the interest, because the annuity is perpetual. Now the proportion, continued the noble Duke, is just, because the person possessed of the short annuity, may, by investing all the surplus above 75l. in stock, re-create his principal by the time that the annuity expires. It is manifest, therefore, that all which he receives above 75l. a year is part of his capital repaid him, and cannot be considered as income. Yet upon his 200l. a year he is to pay 20l. a year to this tax, while the other is to pay a little more than one pound. In this view it is impossible to reconcile it with the principles of equity, and innumerable cases might be quoted in which the hardship of the tax would be felt in the same unequal way.

If the tax should endure so long as to make it inconvenient for a person to discharge it by disposing of a part of his capital, then in its effect, it will have all the consequences of a permanent tax; in which case it will not only prove more injurious to individuals, but to the general welfare of the State; for there is a most essential distinction between taking a sum from the public upon articles as

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they are consumed, and taking a sum from the means by which produce is to be obtained. The latter strikes directly at the vital principle of all national prosperity, for it operates as a check upon improvement. At a time when every writer upon political economy—every practitioner in husbandry, is of opinion, that tithe operates as a general check to the advancement of agriculture, and the melioration of the country, you are about, my Lords, to adopt a measure which will establish a new tithe over the whole kingdom; and that which in its partial operation is deemed to be so injurious, you are about to generalize and extend to all the arts and manufactures, as well as to add it to the existing tithe upon agriculture. Now when it is agreed upon all hands that the tithe which is derived from annual profits, ought to be converted into principal, if it could be done without affecting the interests of those who derive their income from it, you are about to establish a more enlarged tythe, and that in the heaviest way; for it not only proposes to take a tenth of every man's industry, but in many cases a tenth of the capital necessary to be employed in order to make that industry productive. In the mixed and uncertain tendency of the tax, the most striking inequalities would impede even its success as a measure of finance, whereas, if it had been directed at capital, it would have been less complicated, and less unequal. It is a pretty general opinion that capital cannot be got at nor ascertained; but if the principle be once admitted, that capital or property is to be charged in proportion to the protection it derives from the Government, surely it may be discovered. I do not feel it to be my duty, continued the noble Duke, because I state my objections to one tax, or to one mode of taxation, that I should suggest another in its stead; but yet I think that a tax might be found equal to the exigency of the moment, and not liable to any of the objections which are justly advanced against this bill—I mean a tax upon successions, not merely collateral, but lineal. This is not my idea, but is the suggestion of a noble friend of mine, whose abilities this House has often had occasion to witness, particularly on points of finance (the Earl of Lauderdale). It will be needless now to enter into the details, as I hope that my noble friend will digest and give to the public his ideas on the subject. I entertain no doubt of the advantage to be derived from it. I speak more confidently on the subject, because I can claim no merit from having thrown it out; and yet, if it should be found to be impracticable, I must incur some blame for having mentioned it.

Having stated my objections to the principle of the bill, I come next, my Lords, to its particular provisions. The professed object

of the bill is to take a tenth of that income of which every person is possessed; but, in many instances, it will operate in a far greater proportion, and, in my opinion, it is highly unjust and impolitic that it should take even the tenth in a variety of cases. I have no hesitation in saying, that the profits derived from the practice of science, ought in no case to be taxed. It should be the policy of every state to cherish, cultivate, and protect the arts, and to give such encouragement to professional men of every description, as should engage their settlement in the country; and therefore, it is not until their profits shall be turned into capital, that they ought to be made the objects of taxation, beyond the articles of mere consumption incident to all the community. Then they may be the subject of taxation, inasmuch as that capital is protected. But laying general principles aside, I contend, that by the present bill, a greater proportion, or more than a tenth in many instances, is taken from them; and if I recur to the Assessed-tax Act for last year, I find there enough to warrant me in this assertion. When that bill passed last year, there were introduced into it in the course of its progress through the other House, a variety of exceptions calculated to relieve particular classes of men, and to make allowances in their favour, to which they were well entitled in reason and in justice, but no such exceptions are made for them in the present bill. Why they should not have occurred to those who were concerned in the framing of the bill now, or why they have not been attended to, I am at a loss to imagine. I mean allowances in favour of professional men, whose income cannot be considered as a clear profit, a large portion of it being necessarily expended, in order to enable them to exercise their profession. A medical man, for instance; can any noble Lord imagine that the whole income of a medical man is clear gain? Much the contrary; every man knows that a physician who goes in his carriage to visit his patients, will have more business than a physician who walks on foot. His carriage and his horses, therefore, are to be considered as implements of his business, and ought to be allowed for as they were in the former bill. Other professional men ought to have been in like manner considered. Did not every man know that it cost a lawyer a considerable sum yearly to enable him to pursue his profession; and it was the same with various other descriptions of persons employed in scientific pursuits.

His Grace then came to an argument which, he said, he almost hesitated to state, because he was aware of the obloquy which was too frequently thrown upon persons who might be supposed to state a case that in any way affected themselves; yet, however, he must incur the hazard of this obloquy in the discharge of his duty. He

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alluded to the situation of land owners under the operation of this bill. It was obvious that every person possessed of estates must incur the expence of agents in order to manage those estates, to collect their rents, and to superintend and inspect them. No allowance was made for their expences, and yet the sums thus paid in salaries would again come to be assessed and paid to the tax by the agents themselves; for though in many instances land-owners did not give salaries sufficient to bring their agents within the full charges of the provisions of the bill, yet in no case perhaps was an agent for an estate employed whose whole income did not amount to 200*l.* a year. Here then was an instance in which the amount of the sums thus paid to agents would be taxed twice—first, by the land-owner, who was not allowed to deduct it from his income; and, secondly, by the agent who received it. If, again, the salary given to an agent were but a just remuneration for his services, his employer must discharge the tax for him, and consequently must pay 20 per cent. on that part of his income. The next ground of inequality was, that he found it established in many instances that income was not to be ascertained exactly by what a person received in the year preceding, but by an average of three, five, or more years, according to the particular circumstances of the case. A trader was to decide for himself. This option was clearly given to him as an advantage, and meant to operate as an alleviation from the too great pressure of the tax. This was clearly the ground of the option given, and upon no other principle, he conceived, could it be resorted to; why not then make the provision general? The principle of the bill was to take from each man a tenth, and no more, of that which he has to dispose of. He found, however, that in the case of land-owners, and of the occupiers of land, that it was left in the power of the commissioners to decide on the manner in which this shall be computed. It would not be difficult to shew that this provision must be exceedingly injurious to the interests of land-owners, and to the occupiers of land, as in many instances they would be obliged to pay a far greater proportion than one tenth. In the case of income arising from woods, fines, &c. it frequently happened that a much larger sum than ordinary was received in one year. The money so acquired was either expended at the time, and therefore ought not to be taxable now, or, which was a stronger case, it might be converted into capital, and the profits arising from it were now to come annually under the charge of this bill. Or suppose, which also frequently happened, that the sum thus received was laid out in the improvement of the lands, then the increased rental was subject to this tax, while by the discretion thus given to the commissioners,

they could go back, and tax the principal sum itself. This, the noble Duke said, was clearly and manifestly unjust.

And now, he said, that he was upon averages, he would remark on an extraordinary clause in the bill, which says—that no person shall deduct from income the whole of what he had expended in repairs either of his house, or of utensils employed in trade the year preceding, but his expenditure must be taken on an average of the three years preceding. Any person who knew how houses were let in London, must be aware that besides the common ordinary and trifling repairs, once in fourteen years, or in twenty-one years, or at the period of the renewal of his lease, the tenant was obliged to expend a considerable sum in the repairing or refitting, under covenants with his landlord. By the present bill a person possessed of 800*l.* a year, will, if he happens to have expended, said his Grace, 600*l.* on his house, two years preceding the passing of this act, be allowed a deduction of 200*l.* for repairs, and consequently will be taxed only upon 600*l.* But if he has expended the 600*l.* in repairs one year before the passing of this bill, he will be allowed 200*l.* a year, for the two first years of the operation of the bill. And if he shall expend the 600*l.* in the actual year of the passing of the act, and that the act shall last three years, he will be allowed by the bill to deduct for the whole of the 600*l.* at the rate of 200*l.* a year, which he ought in truth to be, for his income the first year will be only 200*l.* having laid out the 600*l.* in repairs. The case will be very different with the man who lays out 600*l.* in repairs the year before this act expires; he, though his income will be only 200*l.* will be taxed upon 600*l.*, a thing which is very unequal.

Another case in which land-owners will have to pay more than a tenth, is from the necessary expence of repairs. By the bill a fixed sum is allowed, and in many instances the allowance is certainly sufficient; but in others, it will not. Landlords often contract with their tenants upon renewal of leases, to expend large sums of money either in repairs, or the erection of new buildings in the three, four or five first years of the lease, and they derive increased rents from the sums thus laid out. You now tax them on those increased rents, without allowing them for the sums expended by which they were obtained. In many countries landlords contract with their tenants to make them an allowance in proportion to the sums expended in manuring and improving the soil; yet no deduction is allowed; and here, instead of a 10th, you take perhaps a 5th. The noble Duke stated a variety of other cases to illustrate his position, and concluded this part of his subject with saying, that in many of these instances, unless the landlord should take

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upon himself the paying of the tax, the farm would certainly be thrown up.

He came now, he said, to a more material, and indeed to the most material objection. The landlords might be ruined, without perhaps involving the country in their fall; but, my Lords, said his Grace, if you ruin the farmers, you ruin the nation. Every thing depends upon them. I consider them as peculiarly oppressed by this measure, and it will be found that you must give them an alleviation of the burdens you impose, or you will destroy them. Merchants and traders are charged one-tenth on the clear amount of their profits. They have the option of calculating those profits either on an average of three years, or of taking them on the amount of the last. They are forced to no disclosure; but farmers are obliged to render an account of the exact rents they pay, and upon those rents the tax is laid; and even here you assume a discretion which is most injurious to this valuable class of the community. You say that a farmer renting under 300l. a year, shall pay upon at least one-half, and not more than two-thirds of his rack rent, a tax of ten per cent. A farmer renting above 300l. a year shall pay upon three-fifths, and not more than three-fourths, the same tax of ten per cent. Here you make no allowance for extraordinary losses: nor do you give him the option of an average, by which he may cover one year with another, though nothing is so variable as the income of a farmer. But you say that the profits are fixed so low that it can be no hardship to him. To this I might be disposed to assent, though in some cases I could prove it to be injurious and unfounded. But what will your Lordships say to a clause in the body of the bill, which evidently takes from the farmer all the protection he enjoys from the moderation of this charge? There is a clause empowering the commissioners, or the surveyor, or the inspector, if to any of them it shall appear that the farmer makes a greater profit than that which he will be called upon by the above provision to pay, then it shall be lawful for them to direct the farmer to give in an account of his gains and profits; and it appears to me that it is entirely left to the discretion of the commissioners whether they will charge him upon an average of three years, or upon the one preceding year. At all events he is to pay a tenth of his profits, be they what they may, if, by so charging him, they can take more than by the proportion of his rent. You first establish a *minimum* and a *maximum*, but depart from it the moment that a surveyor or inspector may think his profits exceed the maximum; you lay down your rule, only to depart from it whenever it shall suit your purpose.

I would ask, if the bad faith of farmers is proverbial? if he has not as great a claim to be trusted as the merchant or trader? I hope and believe they are both to be trusted; yet to the one you give an alleviation which to the other you refuse. I need hardly, I am sure, detain your Lordships for an instant in detailing cases to shew the hardship which this mode of taxing the farmer will bring on the most skilful and the most industrious. A grazier must necessarily, in the common course of seasons and of markets, have now and then a losing year; which either follows a year of gain, or is followed by one sufficient to make up his loss. By this bill you charge him upon the year he loses, no matter what his loss may be, in proportion to his rent; and in the year he gains, just sufficient to make up his loss, you charge him upon the whole of his profits, in that particular year, without making any allowance for his bad year. Can you call this just or equitable? Is this protection to the farmer? And this does not hold good of the grazier only, but is in fact applicable to all the varieties of farming. Every person who is conversant with the best manner of managing a tillage farm, knows that a man entering upon a lease for twenty-one years, endeavours to expend the whole of the capital he means to employ in the business in improvements in the first years of that lease—he is content himself with a mere subsistence, until he shall have brought his farm into heart; and he does not look for, nor expect his returns, until he has done so. I wish your Lordships to consider how the tax must operate upon him. You charge him at the beginning of his lease upon a rent which he does not make; but the moment his profits begin, you quit his rent, and take from him a tenth of his profits, whatever they may be. These profits are clearly, to a considerable degree, the return of a part of his capital; and here, therefore, you not only charge him upon the profits derived from his capital and his industry, but a part of his capital itself. I could illustrate the evil tendency of this provision by a variety of other instances equally striking; but I am sure that from your own local knowledge, they must occur to your Lordships.

On these grounds, his Grace said, he thought it his duty to remonstrate against the present measure; he thought it injurious, impolitic, and unjust—injurious, inasmuch as it not only deviated from that principle, which alone ought to govern states in their system of taxation, particularly when they were obliged to resort to forced contributions—namely, that of taking from each individual, in proportion as he had property protected by that state—but that it went to establish over the whole kingdom, that which in its now partial operation was deemed most injurious to the prosperity of the

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nation, namely, the taking a tythe from the profits of a man, without contributing either to the exertions or expence necessary to produce those profits : impolitic, from its being a continued source of vexation, and by harassing the people, likely to make them discontented with their Government : unjust, because, pretending, as it does, to take a tenth of that which each individual has annually to dispose of, in many instances it takes a far greater proportion. Persons deriving their income from professions are not allowed the drawbacks they are entitled to ; the land-owners, in several instances, will have to pay twenty per cent. and the farmers, as he before stated, were shamefully oppressed in comparison with the merchants and traders. He was aware, from the manner in which he had argued the question, he might by some be supposed to have been pleading the cause of the land-owners, but it must be recollected that he had argued their case only on the principle laid down in the preamble of the bill, namely, the taking from every one an exact tenth of that which he had annually to dispose of ; whereas, if his plan were adopted, viz. that of taking an equal proportion of every man's property, then it would fall more heavily, as it ought, on the land-owners. These were the persons who derived the greatest benefit from the protection afforded by the State ; they were, in despite of themselves, fixed to the country, and they ought to pay accordingly. He concluded by saying, that he had so far stated his objections, not with a view of debating the question, or of opposing the measure, for he had, in the course of the last five years, often debated many questions without, in his opinion, any good having resulted from it. He had, within the same period, often opposed acts of the Ministers, which he had conceived to be highly injurious to the welfare of the nation ; he had also proposed many measures of importance, as he believed, to the happiness of the country, but he did not flatter himself that it had produced even the slightest advantage. He might be asked then, why had he troubled the House with his opinion on this occasion ? it was from perceiving a clause in the bill, empowering the Legislature to alter or amend the act in the present session ; from feeling convinced that the framers of the present bill must avail themselves of that privilege, and bring in an act to amend and explain it : in that case his remarks might possibly be of use. If they were trivial, they would, of course, fall to the ground ; but if any of them were founded, then, as he must in fairness suppose, that either they had not occurred, or that they must have been overlooked in the hurry of passing the bill, he might, perhaps, be justified in entertaining a faint hope that though they might not affect the decision of the ques-

tion that night, they might hereafter be found useful in removing the imperfections under which the bill laboured in its present shape.

His Grace then said, he had nothing more to add than his thanks to their Lordships for the indulgence they had shewn him.

The LORD CHANCELLOR left the woofsack, not, he said, to follow the noble Duke through all the detail of the bill that he had gone into, because the discussion of the particular clauses of the bill could only have been of use or advantage in that stage of the bill, that the House had passed, viz. when the bill was in a Committee, and when alterations might have been made, if the suggestions of the noble Duke had impressed the Committee sufficiently to have induced them to think them as important and as necessary to be attended to, as the noble Duke appeared to have thought them. He rose merely to take some notice of those general assertions of the noble Duke, in which he placed so much confidence. The present bill was professedly a bill which had for its object the taxation of income; and the noble Duke had said, it embraced two important principles, the one, the principle of raising a considerable part of the supplies of the year within the year; the other, the principle of effecting that measure by the means of a tax on income. In so stating them the noble Duke had described the two principles correctly and accurately. With regard to the first, the noble Duke does not appear to have completely made up his mind; but he termed it a mere speculative question, and a mere speculative question it was, inasmuch, as it was new in the practice of finance; but although former financiers had not taken such bold and comprehensive views of the possibility of successfully enforcing measures of finance of a far greater extent, and upon a more enlarged scale, than had ever hitherto been attempted, or as these of the measure proposed by the bill, it did not follow that the measure now under consideration was not likely to be eminently successful, and it was agreed on all hands, that for a variety of great and important considerations, which had been ably discussed by a noble friend of his in the course of the debate, if a large portion of the supplies of the year could be raised within the year, it was most desirable to carry that principle into effect. It ought, however, to be recollected that the right honourable gentleman, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had proposed the bill, was the very person who had advised and effectually supported the plan of annually setting a part of the supplies of the year aside for the useful purpose of applying it to the reduction of the national debt—a plan which had now been for some years continued, and from which the public had derived,

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and still continued to derive, advantages so extremely and obviously important that the country could not already have forgotten the gratitude that was due to the man whose superior sagacity and genius had prompted him to suggest and carry into execution a design so noble and so useful. It was reasonable, therefore, to infer that the present measure of raising a tax amounting to ten millions upon income, would be found practicable, and would answer the end proposed. The noble Duke indeed has told the House that a tax on capital directly would be far preferable, to which it is a sufficient answer to state, not the difficulty merely, but the absolute impossibility of ascertaining what the capital of individuals respectively amounts to. The noble Duke has laid great stress upon what he is pleased to term the inequalities of the bill, but most of his arguments on that head seem to have arisen from not having kept the real object of the bill, viz. to raise a tax from income, distinct and clear from considerations that apply solely to a tax on capital. No person ever pretended that in the operations of a measure of the magnitude of that which the bill proposes, it can be wholly free from the imputation of some inequalities. All large taxes must be liable to such imputations more or less, but as much attention has been paid to avoid that effect, as ever was paid to any measure of finance. The noble Duke has insisted on the hardship of taking ten per cent. from the incomes of men of but moderate income; a matter that called to his mind a fact that had been told him by a noble friend of his, who would have related it with much better effect himself, if he could have prevailed upon himself to surmount the embarrassment he always feels in addressing this House. That noble person had a conversation with a tradesman on the subject of the bill, who said his income might, he believed, amount to 300l. a year, and he declared he thought it hard to have to pay thirty pounds out of it for this tax. The tradesman was a barber and hair-dresser, and upon a little reflection upon the tax said,—"But perhaps if I did not pay the thirty pounds, so many of my present customers would not have their heads upon their shoulders for me to shave and dress." That was, his Lordship said, the true defence of the bill; for let a man's income be what it may, little or large, he must pay for its protection, or it will be still less, and perhaps be lost entirely. The noble Duke had told the House that somebody or other had projected a tax that would answer the same end as the present bill, and be less felt, viz. a tax on all successions; but surely a very little reflection would serve to shew that such a tax must be in its individual instances so enormous as to be ruinous to the last degree. Hitherto taxes on articles of consumption had

been selected by Ministers ; and it was evident they were wise in so doing, as the learned and ingenious author who wrote on the tax on collateral successions, that had been in agitation some few years since, had proved in his books. Imports and exports might possibly be selected ; but it could only be for a single year, as the public could not stand the unexpected demand of so large a sum as must be made on exports and imports to raise the necessary money more than once. With regard to tythes, about the abolition of which the noble Duke had said there were but two opinions, as all men were agreed that if a fit substitute could be found to be given to the clergy in lieu of tythes, he begged leave utterly to deny that assertion ; there was perhaps no one question upon which such a variety of opinions prevailed. Nor was it the clergy alone who held tythes, though a clergyman was always invidiously mentioned when tythes were touched upon ; many of the laity held tythes, and held them by as good a tenure as the freeholder held his estate. His Lordship added a variety of farther observations, all tending to rescue the bill from the charges urged against it by the noble Duke.

The question was put, and the contents had it without a division. The bill was then read a third time and passed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, January 8.

At four o'clock there not being a sufficient number of Members present to constitute a House, an adjournment took place of course.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, January 9.

The Volunteer Exemption Bill, the Habeas-corpus Suspension Bill, the Newfoundland Judicature Bill, the Income-duty Bill, and nine Naturalization Bills, received the royal assent by commission.

The House adjourned to the 22d instant.

PROTEST against the bill enabling His Majesty to arrest and detain persons suspected of conspiring against his person and government.

“ DISSENTIENT,

“ 1st, Because the existence of a conspiracy, of an extent so formidable, and of a nature so complicated, that the public disclosures of the evidence necessary to the conviction of one conspirator might enable his accomplices to ascertain the information of Government, and to elude the justice of the country, can alone constitute a necessity sufficient to justify a Peer of Parliament in assenting to any suspension of the Habeas Corpus.

“ 2dly, Because no measures have been taken to make such necessity apparent.

“ 3dly, Because if, from private information, or from the general circumstances of the country, the House were convinced that such necessity did actually exist, it would, nevertheless, be more consonant with the usages, and less derogatory to the dignity of Parliament, to produce substantial documents, rather than the suggestions of Ministers, or the vague suspicions of individuals, in justification of so extraordinary a measure.

“ 4thly, Because the alarms of Ministers are always to be received with mistrust by the Legislature, when the remedy proposed is an extension of their power, and a diminution of the liberty of the subject.

“ 5thly, Because these principles of jealousy, applicable to all times, appear to me to be peculiarly so to the present, when a system of Government by alarm has been resorted to year after year, and powers similar to those required by this bill been obtained on the score of allegations which subsequent events have refuted; a memorable example of which occurred in the years 1794 and 1795, when a number of persons detained under the provisions of a bill similar to this, were all either liberated without trial, or acquitted by a verdict of their country.

“ 6thly, Because the danger of an invasion (the pretence for suspending the Habeas Corpus last session) exists no longer. And it is subversive of that mutual confidence which should subsist between the government and the governed, to require with distrust in their dispositions, and a continual suspension of one of the most essential safeguards of their liberty, the affections of the people, manifested in their late exertions at the moment of alarm, and in the cheerfulness with which they have submitted to burdens unparalleled in their pressure, and now confessedly unequal in their operation.

(Signed)

HOLLAND.”

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, January 9.

A message from the Lords informed the House that their Lordships had agreed to the Income Bill without any amendment, and to the bill for exempting certain persons serving in volunteer corps from being balloted in the militia, with several amendments, to which they desired the concurrence of the House.

These amendments were read and agreed to.

Mr. ABBOTT moved that there be laid before the House accounts of the income and charges on the consolidated fund for the year, commencing in January 1798, and ending in January 1799, &c.

And also of the ordinary and extraordinary produce of the revenue for the same period, distinguishing England from Scotland, &c. &c.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had been in the House of Peers, where the royal assent was given by commission to the Income Bill, the Habeas-corpus Suspension Bill, and several other public and private bills.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved, that this House do now adjourn to Tuesday the 22d day, January instant.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, January 22.

Lord GRENVILLE said, he had a message from His Majesty, which he had it in command to deliver, and begged that it might be read to the House—

[For a Copy of which see the Proceedings of the Commons.]

It was immediately read by the Lord Chancellor, and afterwards by Mr. Arnott, the reading clerk.

Lord GRENVILLE then said, he should move that the message from His Majesty be taken into consideration to-morrow, and the Lords to be summoned. His Lordship said, for the sake of convenience, he would add, that his intention was to move an address to-morrow to His Majesty, to thank His Majesty for his gra-

cious communication, and to assure His Majesty that the House would proceed to take into consideration the important subject of His Majesty's message, and apply such means as should appear to them most applicable to the occasion. His Lordship observed, that the address he meant to propose would be so drawn, that it would confine itself to its professed object, without pledging any of their Lordships to a particular mode of proceeding, but leave the whole subject open to their Lordships' deliberate judgement.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, January 22.

At four o'clock the House met pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS brought up a message from His Majesty, of which the following is a copy.

“GEORGE R.

“His Majesty is persuaded that the unremitting industry with which our enemies persevere in their avowed design of effecting the separation of Ireland from this kingdom, cannot fail to engage the particular attention of Parliament; and His Majesty recommends it to this House to consider of the most effectual means of counteracting, and finally defeating, this design; and he trusts that a review of all the circumstances which have recently occurred (joined to the sentiment of mutual affection and common interest) will dispose the Parliaments of both kingdoms to provide in the manner which they shall judge most expedient, for settling such a complete and final adjustment as may best tend to improve and perpetuate a connection essential for their common security, and to augment and consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the British empire.”

G. R.”

On the motion of Mr. Secretary Dundas, “that this message be taken into consideration to-morrow,”

Mr. SHERIDAN rose and said—Sir, when His Majesty's message is taken into consideration to-morrow, I take it for granted that the address, which will then be proposed to be voted, will contain an assurance that we shall proceed to an early consideration of the subject. I therefore think it fair to give this early notice, that I view the bringing forward of this question, at this time, as a measure replete with so much mischief, that I hold it my duty to take the

first opportunity to do every thing in my power to arrest the farther progress of it. I am convinced, Sir, that it is the common feeling of all persons in this House, as well as of those out of it, to adopt every measure that may tend to perpetuate and strengthen the connection between the two countries; because they must be convinced that a separation would not only injure, but would be fatal to the interests and the existence of both. What I point at particularly is, the time of bringing forward this question. Sir, I shall certainly join in returning His Majesty our thanks for his communication; but instead of engaging to proceed to an early consideration of the subject, I shall feel it to be my duty to endeavour to persuade the House not to proceed to such a consideration.

Mr. Chancellor PITT—The honourable gentleman has certainly dealt with fairness and candour, in announcing his intention of opposing the motion; an intention which, if he had not announced, no man, I believe, would have anticipated. What I understand is, that the honourable Member will object to the address, which does no more than convey to His Majesty the assurance that we will take into our consideration a subject of such great magnitude, and of such transcendent importance. What the arguments will be by which the honourable gentleman will attempt to satisfy the House that we ought not to proceed to the consideration of the measure; and that what His Majesty, from his paternal regard to the interests of the empire, has thought proper to recommend, ought to be rejected without consideration; I say, Sir, what the arguments of the honourable gentleman will be, I am at a loss to guess. At the same time, Sir, I wish to inform the House, that my intention is only to propose an address to His Majesty to-morrow; and then, after a sufficient interval, to proceed to the farther discussion of the subject. The day which I should propose would be Thursday se'nnight. Sir, it is not my wish even then to press the House to come to a vote, until the outline has been opened; upon that day the general outline and principles will be submitted, and it will be proposed to have the resolutions printed. It is then my wish to allow a farther interval, for the purpose of enabling gentlemen to be properly prepared for the discussion.

Mr. SHERIDAN. I wish, Sir, only to say a single word—The right honourable gentleman speaks as if it would be disrespectful to His Majesty to oppose the address. That right honourable gentleman must give me leave to say, that though he speaks of His Majesty, and of his paternal regard for the interests of the empire, I have a right to consider the measure as the counsel of His Majesty's Ministers. Sir, I deprecate the mischievous consequences.

of any discussion at all ; and therefore I am not to wait for a discussion when I deprecate the consequences of it. With respect to the arguments by which I may attempt to persuade the House, I hope, at least, that the right honourable gentleman will wait till he hears them.

The motion for taking His Majesty's message into consideration to-morrow, was agreed to.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, January 23.

Lord GRENVILLE moved, That the order of the day for taking His Majesty's most gracious message into consideration be read ; after which his Lordship moved an address to His Majesty to the following effect :—The House returned their thanks to His Majesty, for his most gracious communication, and expressed their conviction of His Majesty's paternal regard for, and attention to, the welfare of his Irish subjects ; and also expressed their readiness to concur in any measures which, on due examination, might be found necessary or expedient towards the consolidation of the general interests of the British empire.

Lord Grenville then observed, that the address was obviously of that nature as to render it unnecessary for him to trouble their Lordships with any arguments in favour of its adoption.

The question being put, the address was voted, *nem. dis.* and the House, on the motion of Lord Grenville, adjourned till Thursday the 31st instant.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, January 23.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS brought up several papers relative to the proceedings of certain societies in Ireland, and the Rebellion in that country, which were ordered to be laid on the table.

The order of the day for the consideration of His Majesty's message being read,

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS rose. He said, he thought it almost unnecessary to say one word more than simply to move an address to His Majesty, thanking him for his gracious communication. His right honourable friend had yesterday stated to the House, that it was not intended to move the immediate consideration of the topics in the message, but only to move an address signifying the readiness of the House to take them into their serious consideration; and to move a farther day for resuming the subject; and even after it has been resumed, to appoint such a day for the farther discussion of it, as would give every gentleman an opportunity fully and dispassionately to examine the whole of the question, both as it might affect this country and the sister kingdom. He should just add, that as it had happened to him yesterday, he was that evening not able to conjecture what sort of opposition it was which the honourable gentleman meant to such an address as that he proposed. Here the right honourable Secretary moved the address, which was in substance, that the House would proceed with all due dispatch to the consideration of the several interests recommended to their serious attention in the message.

Mr. SHERIDAN rose, and spoke to the following effect:—Sir, I must frankly declare that I am not of the same opinion with the right honourable gentleman, who thinks that there is nothing more necessary on the part of His Majesty's Ministers than to move a mere address, returning the thanks of this House for His Majesty's most gracious communication. The subject is too important lightly to be passed over in any stage of its progress, and the interests that will naturally come into discussion too vast to be bounded over with an unreflecting rapidity. Not one man in the country would be free from reproach, if he could regard with apathy or with an ease of temper approaching to indifference, a question that at once involves every thing dear to Irishmen, and which ought to be dear to every subject of the British empire. As I cannot view these matters wholly with unconcern, I must think that more is necessary on the part of His Majesty's Ministers than merely to move an address of thanks. I say, Sir, I cannot be of this opinion, because when I find it stated that it is the principal object of the message from the Crown to invite the Commons of Great Britain to the consideration of means of finally adjusting the interests in common between Great Britain and Ireland, I am naturally led to inquire how the terms of the final adjustment made and agreed to by the Parliaments of the two countries, in 1782, came to fail of their object. In that year there was an adjustment; and no man acquainted with the history of that period, no man whose study has

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not been confined to mere local occurrences, can have forgotten in what kind of circumstances that adjustment arose, and under what kind of auspices it was made final. Nothing can be more obvious than the propriety of inquiring at this time how that adjustment failed of its object. The right honourable gentleman, adopting the language of the message, has assumed that the House is already in possession of the facts and arguments on which are to be founded the policy, justice, and expediency of agitating at this time such a discussion; in this way telling the whole world that the final adjustment ratified in 1782 was not a final adjustment in point of fact, but an adjustment to be held final at the pleasure of the English Government. But there are no such things in the possession of the House as the materials from whence to reason that it is now either politic, expedient, or just, to come to the discussion of this question of final adjustment. Hence before Ministers recommended to the House of Commons to take measures that lead inevitably to the discussion of some plan of Union, it was incumbent upon them to have shewn us that the last pledge of the English Parliament to the people of Ireland, by which their independence was recognized and their rights acknowledged, has not produced that unanimity, that concord of sentiment, and earnest exertion to promote their own welfare, while they cordially and sincerely manifested their zeal for the happiness and prosperity of this country, which that people were expected to display, and which the Parliaments of the two countries sought to cherish. But more than the effect immediately upon the people, it is fit to inquire whether that final adjustment led to the measures of mutual confidence, and produced that unanimity of sentiment and object in the two Parliaments, which, for the happiness and honour of both kingdoms, every man wished might be its permanent effect. Sir, I think it impossible for any man clearly to shew that there has been any want of this unanimity on any important occasion. I am the more strongly impressed with this belief, because a solemn declaration of the Irish Parliament, sanctioned by all Ireland, is now on record, wherein we have it emphatically stated that the independence of Ireland will be asserted by the people of Ireland, and that their Parliament is an independent Legislature. The recollection of this declaration brings to my mind the strong apprehension of the danger, the peril of agitating a-new the question of Irish independence. What has that declaration stated? Sir, it is a manly, firm, and honourable testimony to all time, of the proud, noble spirit of a nation rising into distinction and mounting up to freedom. They there say, that "there is no power whatever competent to make laws for Ireland but the Parlia-

ment of Ireland; "and among other things equally strong and just, we find them assert this" as their birth right, and which they are determined in every situation to defend and maintain against whatever kind of enemy." When I find this declaration of the Irish Parliament, and acquiesced in by the English, that they did come to a final adjustment is obvious; yet the words "a solid, permanent basis," convey some reflections on the proceedings of the Parliament since that period, and it might fairly be supposed, that only its delinquency would have instigated His Majesty's Ministers to adopt a course of conduct, by which, if they succeed in the enterprize, they shall accomplish for ever the subjugation of Ireland, and the slavery of its inhabitants. But, Sir, I must think the people in that country who really cherish a love of rational liberty, who have dwelt with delight on the recollection of that, till now, auspicious period, when independence came upon them as it were by surprize, when the Genius of Freedom rested upon their island—the whole people, in short, will come to this second adjustment with a temper which I am afraid, Sir, will augur not tranquillity but disquietude, not prosperity but calamity, not the suppression of treason but the extension and increase of plots to multiply and ensanguine its horrors. Nevertheless, I must own that there is something informal in this way of treating the question immediately before the House. But much as I respect your forms, Sir, I own to you those are things, and this is a question, which I cannot permit myself lightly to discuss, and which ought not to be shrunk from on light grounds. I am aware that the grounds I stand on are at once ticklish and dangerous; that my motives are liable both to misrepresentation and misapprehension; that a licentious few, and an ignorant many, will distort or not perceive the grounds of my arguments, and the use I am desirous to make of them. But there are topics, on the discussion of which a man must not wholly consult the degree of safety to his reputation among the unreflecting portions of mankind—on which he must forget what he owes to his own dignity, if fearful of the insidious misinterpretation of his sentiments, or the more insidious misrepresentation of his motives, he shrink from the subject, and fail to do that which is peremptorily his duty. I feel that to be silent on the present occasion were to act from terror in a way unworthy of the majesty of truth; unbecoming a man enamoured of free discussion; unlike the friend and supporter of general liberty, I cannot do this. My country has claims upon me which I am not more proud to acknowledge than ready to liquidate, to the full measure of my ability. Is there any man who can wish to do less—or have the whole system of human connection and the

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economy of human passions been changed and perverted with those changes in the political world, from which some men derive rank and emolument by the prostitution of integrity and all the virtues? But, Sir, there was a time when I should have been told that to agitate any question in this House relative to the affairs of Ireland, were to retrench upon the rights of the Irish Parliament. That the independence of one Legislature was not to be infringed upon by the discussion of questions which belonged to it exclusively to discuss upon and decide. That we could not agitate the affairs of Ireland in any manner without grossly insulting the dignity, and making a question of the constitutional competence of the Parliament of that country to legislate for themselves. That, in short, it would be to arouse and inflame that quick spirit of independence, which the sister kingdom knew how to express, and had ever appeared both able and ready to infuse into a system of ardent, intrepid opposition to every kind of ulterior domination. But, surely, when now the question is the independence of the Parliament of Ireland, when it is attempted to introduce measures which have in their issues not merely the independence but the existence of this Parliament, honourable gentlemen will not resort to that argument. Probably I shall be told, that I ought not to draw into discussion topics that in their very nature tend to excite discontent, by being closely interwoven with the events of a recent period of distraction and danger: that I cannot dwell long on these topics without relapsing into warmth; that I am liable to use inflammatory language; that in particular I ought to consider the present state of Ireland before I essay the discussion of such intricate and delicate interests as those embraced by the King's message. The right honourable gentleman opposite me, ought to have done all this, he ought to have considered the state of Ireland before he introduced in this House, as the chief servant of the Crown, a subject that, to be met fairly at any time requires much previous preparation, and which at this moment is to put every thing to hazard. Sir, I can see the possible danger of adding to the discontents of the people of Ireland. An intriguing, ambitious enemy, may take advantage of the crisis, and desperate factious spirits at home may seize upon it as an opportunity favourable to the success of their wild and visionary projects. But these dangers are only to be apprehended from the innovation of the rights of the people of Ireland, as forming an independent nation; and he who merely seeks to arrest the arm of the invader, to check his spirit of aggression and usurpation, so far from justly incurring reproach, is in fairness entitled to the praise of honourable and virtuous enterprise. I shall speak out manfully

on an occasion which eminently invites every friend to constitutional liberty to the utmost exertion of his powers. The present moment is our's, the next may be the enemy's. I am perfectly ready, however, to give credit to Ministers for purity of intention. On my word, I think they would not propose here a measure which they believed would ultimately cause a separation of this country from Ireland. With them, I say, it is necessary to the happiness of the empire, that it is essentially a source of wealth and power to continue that connection with Ireland. It is a connection which as much as any man I wish ever to preserve, and I do not think it necessary to claim the indulgence of the right honourable gentleman and the House, when I declare I believe I am equally averse as they are to sedition and revolt adopted in the sister kingdom; that I equally abhor and detest the conduct of an ambitious and rapacious foe in the whole career of his acts of unjust and unprovoked aggression of the rights of the weak or unsuspecting, or indolent states. But am I, therefore, to vote for measures which but too strongly express the character of that system which this enemy had so wickedly and flagrantly pursued? God forbid! Perhaps we are to be told, that the enemy still perseveres in his intention of invading Ireland, and, if that were possible, to sever from the empire one of its most useful and ornamental branches. That he lays in wait for an opportunity to carry decisively into effect these his ambitious views. I do not, Sir, at all doubt but that France now anxiously looks on, eager to come in for a share of the plunder of the liberties of Ireland. The enemy with whom we have to contend is as vigilant as dextrous, and it is in the constitution of his system of universal pillage, and the indiscriminate abuse of every maxim of honourable policy, on all occasions to profit by the distresses or the agitations of other powers. To invite and encourage France, it was enough that His Majesty's Ministers should have brought forward the present measure. There have been nations, who after asserting by their arms their independence, have, by their improvident use of victory, sown the seeds of future degradation and ruin too deep and too diffusive ever to be able again to resist their enemies. So true is it, that external dangers will unite communities, while the moment of triumph ushers in all those recollections of jealousy, of distrust, of uneasiness at the measures of a Government or a Minister, which had laid dormant in the hour of united exertion. I have told you, Sir, that I do not doubt but that France waits with impatience for an opportunity effectually to strike her long-meditated blow against Ireland. She has manifested this spirit from time to time, and I must assume it as a fair ground of argument against the present measure, that its tendency is rather

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to encourage the enemy than drive them from their settled purpose. Not only do I believe that they have agreed on some new expedition and attack, but have increased their exertions from the time the scheme of Union was first agitated by Ministers. But I shall be told this measure will have the effect of defeating the enemy, by shewing them how vain it will be in future to attempt any thing against united Ireland. Now I had hoped that our splendid naval victories, that the discovery of the plots, the possession of the papers, the discomfiture of the projects of the internal and external enemies of Ireland, would have satisfied the minds of all that no new project of invasion can be carried into effect. Sir, I do say, it is the conduct of Ministers towards the Irish nation from which only we can have any reason to apprehend danger. By dividing the native and constitutional defenders of Ireland, they sow among them the seeds of treason, and encourage the attempts of the enemy on that unfortunate country. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) told us yesterday, that without hearing the notice I then gave, he could not have expected such an opposition as the present to the motion, because the word Union was not to be found in the message. That I ought to have known that the described object is Adjustment, not Union. But I must take it for granted the right honourable gentleman will not fly to such a subterfuge on so important a question. Indeed I persuade myself he will admit at once that it is a question of terms and not of fact. If, however, it should be contended, that I am borne out in the inference by the message, look to Ireland. The recent changes in that country, the dismissals of some very respectable characters from office, distinctly points to the project of the Union. I grieve to see such a name as that of Lord Cornwallis to such letters and papers as have within these few weeks been published at the castle. It is painful to read in a letter from this man the dismissal from office of such a character as Sir J. Parnell. With these facts before us, it is perfectly fair to assume that Union is the object, and it being no longer a question of terms, I know I am perfectly in order in arguing against the measure. I will not now enter into a detailed view of the subject, but I am glad the right honourable gentleman has given us an opportunity to know when we may regularly expect to meet it in that way. Neither do I mean to say any thing of the advantages of the measure. I can admit that this is a fair discussion always, and may at this moment safely go forward to the public. But I do not know how to admit, that not to adopt the measure of an Union were to invite the separation of the two countries by a French force. Nay, my opinion is directly the reverse of this; and I must say, that situated

as Ireland is, without having in one instance manifested a wish to unite, but, on the contrary, having unequivocally declared herself hostile to the proposition of a Union, that if it be effected, it will be a Union accomplished by surprize, fraud, corruption, and intimidation, and which must place the people of Ireland in a worse condition than they were before. I think there are two propositions which I have now established: the first, that it is decidedly an infraction and violation of her acknowledged right of independent legislation; and the second, that Union cannot prevent the separation of Ireland from this country by France. The third proposition I have to offer to the consideration of the House is, that it is not possible that, in the present state of Ireland, the people can declare and act upon their genuine sentiments; and let any man who has a head to conceive, and a heart to feel for the miseries of Ireland, put this memorable question to himself—Is it possible that the free, fair, and unbiassed sense of the people of Ireland, can be collected at this time on this question? The English force in that country is at once an answer to this question. I am not to be told, that, if even the people should be cheated and tricked into Union, and out of independence, it is of no consequence, as the measure is intended solely for their good, and that we ought to adopt it now, and convince them afterwards. This will not be argued by any man; or if it is, let gentlemen look to Union under all its circumstances, and strange indeed must be their mode of reasoning, if they do not agree with me, that in the present conjuncture of affairs Union will lead to separate and not to perpetuate the connection. If any man should say, “Yes, we have a force in Ireland; there may be an opposition there to Union, but now is our time to play their own game of 1782 back upon themselves;” if there be a man in this House capable of such mean and contemptible conduct, I leave it to gentlemen to consider what will be the effect of such an example. With respect to the conspiracies which happily have been defeated, I own they were such as ought to be carefully guarded against, and I deplore as much as many that the means of combining insurrection were so various and melancholy. There might have been much of the cause of revolt concealed under the measures of the Government; but if the Irish should at any future period awake from the slumbers of that sloth which the slavery of Union is to occasion, how are they to be replied to if they should say “You offered us your assistance against domestic and foreign enemies, we accepted of it, and gave you affection and gratitude, and the irreproachable pledge of all the support in our power in return. But having enabled us to repel invasion and suppress rebellion, you took from us our Par-

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liament with your 40,000 soldiers, and dissipating our independence, you inflicted on us a Union, to which our fellow subjects, famished and fled, could give no opposition, and this not by force, but by an act of negative intimidation." Said Mr. Sheridan, those who understand what it is to acquire negative successes, will be at no loss to comprehend what I mean by negative intimidation—"If the people of Ireland should say, that by your forces you deprived them of the means of defending themselves; that you wrung from their independence, what influenced the Parliament not to return to them, the people, the right of suffrage, but to give the Irish people up to foreign domination?"—Consider, I conjure you, these matters, and ask yourselves what would be the character of any future insurrection? I will not say that those grievances would justify insurrection, but I will say, that in all its great and interesting features it would be quite different from that recently subdued, and there would be nothing in it of which they need be ashamed. They need not skulk from the question, for the struggle would be to resent the plunder of their rights, and not the differences subsisting between Protestant and Catholic, not for schemes of wild and foolish Republicanism, not from ill-humour towards one set of men, or one set of measures. Instead of an union of sentiment, I maintain, that if you adopt the measure unfolded by the message, you would create an union of dissatisfaction. It is impossible to conceive that the measure is palatable in Ireland, unless we can suppose, that having for 300 years endured the most inhuman insults, that at last, when they had wrung from this country that which it was a shame to have deprived them of, they would freely, and without bias, give it up 16 years afterwards; that they would surrender their rights, because it was the pleasure of a British Minister to propose that the Irish Parliament should no longer exist. This is a proposition which cannot be entertained. Undoubtedly, if I had been told that the whole people of Ireland had declared that they would shake off all allegiance; that the Parliament had violated the rights of the People; that the country did not prosper under its constitution; I see strong reasons for agreeing to the proposition of Union. But on the contrary, we have been told upon high authority that the comforts of the people, that the prosperity of Ireland have progressively increased with time ever since the independence of her Parliament was recognized.

The Irish Commons have been thanked in speeches from the Throne for their patriotic vigilance in defeating the internal enemies of the country: and are the People of Ireland now to be told, that, on the eve of new insurrections, the Parliament of Great Britain,

sitting in Westminster, can better provide means of security and defence for Ireland, than could the Parliament of Ireland sitting in Dublin? After the example we have had of the great wisdom and profound powers of minute research of our own Parliament on a memorable occasion, after the report of the celebrated Committee of Conspiracy, whose reports stand contradicted by the verdicts of British Juries, and whose accusations have been falsified by verdicts of acquittal—[A cry of “Hear! Hear!”]—Gentlemen may, if they please, deny me this conclusion from the premises, but I peremptorily repeat it—They may talk as disrespectfully as they please of English Juries, but I maintain, that the Juries of Ireland, to say the least, have returned verdicts of conviction more contrary to justice, and much more dishonorable to them as men, than those acquittals of the Juries of England could possibly be. But to return to the question: are we to be told that the measure of an Union will not wholly dissolve the Legislature of Ireland; that Independence will survive Union, though in a modified state; that Parliament will be left to judge of the local affairs of Ireland? Really, Sir, this seems almost too much for men’s feelings—A Parliament!—a sort of National Vestry for the Parish of Ireland, sitting in a kind of mock legislative capacity, after being ignobly degraded from the rank of Representatives of an Independent People; and deprived of the functions of an Inquisitorial Power, exercising and enjoying the greatest authority that any Parliament can possess. From these propositions, and having merits to plead, the presumption fairly is, that it is impossible the Members of the Irish Parliament, no more than their constituents, can come to the question of Union with unbiassed minds, or agree to it under any other circumstance except of great force. Consider the question in another point of view. ‘Is the Parliament of England competent to legislate for the Parliament of Ireland?’ Impossible. Every advantage of situation favours the one, the other is unfitted for governing, or giving law, by every disadvantage of situation, and every dissimilarity of temper and habit. An high authority of the sister nation, no less an authority than the Lord Chancellor Clare, has said, that the English Parliament is less acquainted with the state of Ireland than any other body of men in the world. How can it be, that, in this state of recorded ignorance, the Parliament of England is better fitted to legislate for Irishmen, than that of Ireland with its experience? To assume this, were to advance the most monstrous and preposterous proposition that ever fell from man. Or is the system of Ministers to be, to embody their hoards, and, after new plots are

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hatched, to read the Riot Act to the Parliament of Ireland? With respect to intimidation, would it not be to intimidate the Irish, were they told England would not in future be induced to send troops, or furnish money to Ireland; and that they would be left in a state of nakedness and poverty, at the mercy of those who once distracted the country? It would be enough to arouse their indignation, that these hints would be conveyed to them by a secretary or a clerk, and some men who are disgusted with acts of Irish Government, would, perhaps, give up Parliament in their heart, whilst others, who will view the question with more calmness, but not more honesty, will infer from the dismissal of such great characters as I have mentioned, that the Government of this country will intimidate those whom they cannot persuade. They will see to what extent the same system must be carried in the military and every other department. And can they, after this, be expected to say, that the fair opinion of the people of Ireland was collected on this subject?

Under all these circumstances, I think, Sir, I may assume that I have made out my proposition, that if you effect an Union now, no man can say that Ireland was a party to it; if so, ultimate separation must follow. Were it of consequence to speak of this measure in another manner, I would ask, What would the honourable gentleman opposite to me say if France acted in a similar manner, and this not to a country in alliance with her—not so to a mere neutral country, but to a country dear to her on every account, to that country whose sons were fighting her battles in every quarter of the globe? What would they say if, after all, France annexed the territory of her Friend and Sister to France as one and indivisible, with forty thousand French defenders at their gates, &c? Would it not be said, that it was the greatest perfidy? The King of Sardinia gave his consent that the French should take possession of his capital and territory, but it was the effect of force. And now we were to adopt a similar system in Ireland. I hear much of French principles, but I wish gentlemen would not so closely follow French practices. Let us abstain from French corruption, French usurpation, French perfidy. Let us leave no ground for saying, that we have made use of corruption to acquire ascendancy or subjugate the rights of any people. Let our Union be a Union of mind and spirit, as well as of interest and power—not that sort of marriage in which fraud is the suitor, and force the ratifier of the solemn contract. Let me conjure you not to commit a violent rape on your sister Ireland; for you may, by well-timed overtures, get her as a comfort at your side, full of love, full of fidelity, and full of

confidence. You must be convinced that she will be in a deplorable situation indeed, if the bans are to be published from the trumpets of forty thousand British troops.

I think, Sir, I have endeavoured to shew—I may say, without vanity, I have shewn, that there would be great danger even if you carry the measure; and I should like to know what are the dangers of delay, and what the necessity for dispatch. I did expect that Ministers would set out by shewing us this; but probably they have reserved themselves for a farther opportunity—[Here Mr. Sheridan apologized for any warmth he might have displayed in the course of his speech, and observed, that if the question had been fairly taken up, instead of by intimidation and corruption, the House might have expected to have seen less warmth of manner.]—The only arguments I have seen for the measure that I can suppose come from Ministers, are those contained in a book written, as I understand, by two gentlemen in office in Ireland, and which contains a statement that is now circulated as the terms of the Union. A more offensive or more flimsy production I have never read. In this pamphlet I find some arguments for dispatch, and those tremendous arguments are the dread of the power of the Pope, and the English Opposition; the probability that the Parliaments of the two countries may alter their opinions by change of Ministers; and lastly, one that is highly indecent, the supposition that we may lose our virtuous Sovereign—[Here Mr. Sheridan commented on those different points, and said, he thought it a strange way of counteracting the inflammatory effect of the speeches of the English Opposition on the proceedings of the English Parliament to bring a batch of Irish Members into that House to partake of the sedition of the Minority. But it is imputed to Opposition that they are liable to change their opinions; now the only example of this is the Regency, when the Parliament of Ireland agreed with a great Minority in the English Parliament in the principle, objecting merely to the powers to be given to the Regent].—But, Sir, I wish Ministers to give fair play to Ireland. I have stated three of the arguments for dispatch; and the fourth for the measure is one that must every where excite indignation. This is, that the Irish took advantage in 1782 of the war, and that therefore England may now take advantage of the force of the country for the extinction of the independence of Ireland. This is the creed of the Castle; but the English are not to be insulted in this way, nor their character traduced. Having in a general way thus combated the arguments of that pamphlet, Mr. Sheridan next took a view of the subject as a constitutional question, and contended, that as well

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might the English Parliament vote the Crown absolute, perpetuate a power in the King to control the grants of Parliaments, and give to this Parliament a right to exercise a vigour beyond the law, and vote itself not at all responsible to the people. It is no light matter even to have one hundred Members coming here from Ireland without the means of being regularly instructed by their constituents; but, perhaps, I am to be told, as I understand has been asserted by an honourable gentleman opposite to me, that when once the Parliament meets the people have no right to hear of what their representatives are about, and that, therefore, it is not merely dangerous, but unconstitutional, to publish an account of our proceedings. Sir, I must suppose the right honourable gentleman to whom this doctrine is imputed, never used it in argument; for certainly if I found such doctrine urged in a pamphlet, I should think it my duty to move, that the House might instruct the Attorney General to prosecute the author, and that the book should be burnt by the common hangman. I once recommended a prosecution in this House, and once only in my life; it was against the author of a book where it had been stated, that the tree might remain sound, even though the branches were lopped off. Now I think the same effect would follow, were that measure of restraint adopted by the House. But if it is said that the principle of Union was adopted by Parliament in the instance of Scotland, I cannot admit that the existence of one bad precedent is any argument for adopting a second. With respect to the power of the Irish Parliament to agree to the measure, I will say, that I think no power on earth has a right to proscribe the independence of the people. I have heard a vigorous Statesman (Lord Grenville) use an argument that enforces this: He said, that to alter the chartered rights of any Company, would be to change the power and prerogative of the Crown, and that His Majesty could not assent to a bill for such a purpose though it should even pass the two Houses of Parliament.

With respect to the enemies of the British Government, it had two enemies in Ireland, "Poverty and Ignorance," and unless it can be shewn that the present measure will remove these—will prevent the repetition of those scenes of distress which passed in Ireland when there were in the city of Dublin alone 12,000 labourers, &c. out of employment, living on raspings of bread, or starving with their families—unless these evils can be ameliorated, if not wholly corrected by a Union, I must be unfriendly to the measure. If the people of Ireland be active and industrious in every country but their own, it must be the effect of their Government. First remove the causes of their misery, and then invite them, if you will, to a

closer Union. Mr. Arthur Young has attributed the growth of the evils that render miserable the poor of Ireland to the progress of French principles, but I am quite convinced the misery of that unfortunate class has had its origin and continues to increase with the exactions and imposts of their overgrown Lords. [Here Mr. Sheridan resumed his arguments and comments on the argument in the pamphlet above alluded to, which relates to Opposition; observing that no apprehensions of mischief need surely be entertained from it, especially if a noble Marquis in another place was right in saying that Opposition is no more.] Sir, I must say I think that noble person might as well have spared our feelings, and not have cut his clumsy capers on our grave. He has said he is no party man. Sir, I blame no man for not being a party man, but I respect too well the memory of a Marquis of Rockingham; I respect too well the memory of a Mr. Burke; I also respect too well the memory of those principles which some of the present members of Administration once were proud to avow—I think I ought to respect myself, though not of much importance; but particularly the great and virtuous characters with whom I have the honour to be connected—I ought to respect all those, and each of them, too much to join with the noble Marquis in his death song over the Manes of Party. And, Sir, I hope, though at present the banners of Opposition be furled in secession, they will again be displayed, and that its Members will come forward and rally round the Constitution when danger menaces its sacred foundations; that they will prove worthy of their principles, and of that liberty they value dear, by asserting and defending the independence of every legitimate, constitutional Parliament, and the rights and liberties of every people. He concluded with moving the following amendment:—

“ At the same time to express the surprise and deep regret with which this House now, for the first time, learns from His Majesty, that the final adjustment which, upon His Majesty’s gracious recommendation, took place between the two kingdoms in the year 1782, and which, by the declaration of the Parliaments of both countries, placed the connection between them upon a solid and permanent basis, has not produced the effects expected from that solemn settlement; and farther, humbly to express to His Majesty, that His Majesty’s faithful Commons having strong reason to believe that it is in the contemplation of His Majesty’s Ministers to propose a Union of the Legislatures of the two kingdoms, notwithstanding the said final and solemn adjustment, feel it to be their bounden duty, impressed as they are with the most serious apprehensions of the con-

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sequences of such a proceeding at this time, to take the earliest opportunity humbly to implore His Majesty not to listen to the counsel of those who shall advise or promote such a measure at the present crisis, and under the present circumstances of the empire."

Mr. CANNING rose and said:—If, Sir, my honourable friend, who proposed this amendment, had confined himself in his speech to the single topic which he announced as the main foundation of his objections to the address, that of the impropriety of the time at which the subject of the King's message has been brought forward, I should have felt that upon that topic alone I must have differed widely from him. But I confess that the opposition which I feel myself bound to give to the amendment, rests equally on the more general grounds which my honourable friend has stated in the course of his speech; through which I shall endeavour, to the best of my ability, to follow him, assigning the reasons which induce me to take a view of the subject so different from that which he has taken.

Before, however, I proceed to notice the arguments upon which the amendment is supported, I will first advert to the principal ground upon which is rested the opposition to the address, namely, the resolution entered upon the Journals of the House in 1782. To the same Journals I beg leave to refer for the refutation of the arguments urged by my honourable friend; and that reference will, I trust, completely do away the ground upon which those arguments have been built. It is true, indeed, that the words "*final adjustment*," were made use of in those resolutions; but if the House will but attend to what followed in the same Journals, they will see that the resolutions there recorded were immediately followed by another resolution evidently of a perspective nature, which declared the necessity of establishing some more permanent system, by which alone the tranquillity and prosperity of Ireland could remain uninterrupted, and continue to be improved. A due attention to this last resolution must undoubtedly remove all imputation of impropriety from the measure now proposed, and all charge of inconsistency with the former proceedings of the House. The Adjustment which my honourable friend contends to have been so "*final*," as to preclude all views of farther arrangement, appears, at the very moment that it was recorded on the Journals of Parliament, to have been accompanied by a declaration of the opinion of Parliament, that *something farther* was absolutely necessary.

But my honourable friend has laid great stress on the impropriety and danger of stirring such a question at a moment when Ireland is distracted and convulsed, and when the fate of the whole British

empire is exposed to a crisis of the most trying and perilous nature. The House must surely remember, and my honourable friend should recollect, that for these three years past, those who are in the habit of opposing His Majesty's Ministers, have repeatedly been calling for inquiries into the state of affairs in Ireland, though such inquiries were not then brought within the view of the House in any regular mode, nor did they come supported by any recommendation from the Throne. Nay, in the last session of Parliament it was stated as a high contempt shewn to the House, that when His Majesty was sending down a message to require of Parliament to enable His Majesty to avail himself of the offers of the English Militia regiments to extend their services to Ireland for the purpose of quelling the rebellion then raging in that country,—it was then stated as a high contempt of the House of Commons that His Majesty's message, while it required this new power from Parliament, contained no account of the general state of Ireland, no detail of the rise and progress of the Rebellion, no call upon Parliament to inquire how the mischiefs in Ireland had been occasioned, and how they might best be cured. Gentlemen then insisted on the propriety of an inquiry into Irish affairs, and into the causes of the Rebellion. Now, it seems, they have no wish for any investigation, and all their curiosity has subsided. Perhaps the proposal of such an inquiry might then be supposed to proceed from an innocent curiosity; for it may be recollected, that it was then stated in this House as a doubtful question, "Which were the Rebels in Ireland?" But surely it is unfair to call for a message at one time as proper and necessary, and at another time, when it comes, to object to the moment as highly unreasonable, and not even so much as condescend to take the subject of the message into consideration.

And now, Sir, with regard to the posture of affairs in Ireland, into an examination of which, though I am not at present disposed minutely to enter, I must nevertheless place it in a very different point of view from that in which it has been pictured by my honourable friend. Has my honourable friend inquired into the state of Ireland since late events have taken place—events which are now notorious, and cannot possibly be disputed? Is it not notorious that a Rebellion has existed, and that it is now checked, though, perhaps, not effectually quelled? Is it not notorious that the object of the traitorous machinations which gave rise to that Rebellion was not any partial change of men or measures, but a total subversion of the existing Government and Constitution of the country, and the complete destruction of all connection between the Sister Kingdom and Great Britain? And, finally, is it not notorious, not only from

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the verdict of the Irish Juries (into a comparison between the authority of whose verdict, with that of the verdicts of acquittal of English Juries so emphatically commended by my honourable friend, I will not enter—but will rather refer to other authorities, which will, perhaps, but show what authority these verdicts of acquittal can claim) authorities which can leave no doubt in the mind of any impartial man—which may, perhaps, show that legal acquittal is not always a proof of moral innocence, not only, Sir, from the verdicts of Irish Juries, but from the avowals and confessions of the traitors themselves; is it not notorious that conspiracies have existed in Ireland, which not only went to sap the foundations of the Constitution in Ireland, but which were most pointedly distinguished by an attempt to effect a total separation of that country from the British empire? Conspiracies, not for Catholic Emancipation—not for Parliamentary Reform—but for the total subversion of all Government, and for the complete separation of the two countries? Is it then possible to know all these circumstances, and not to feel how deeply interested Great Britain is in the fate of Ireland; or, is it possible that to avowals thus made by the self-convicted traitors, not in recantation of past errors, but with a determination to persist in them—avowals made, not in intreaty for pardon for the evils they have done, but in regret for what they have left undone; to avowals of a design that would have laid in ashes the pride of that capital, for whose prosperity and pre-eminence such anxious alarms are now expressed: to avowals, that though their abominable schemes have been detected, they are not as yet defeated; to avowals that, though the first fruits of their labours were lost, their hope still survived that loss; to such avowals I must ask, is it possible to refuse credit? After the detection, therefore, of these deep and damned plots, is it not expedient, nay a thing of urgent necessity, to examine into and adopt the most effectual means of counteracting the pernicious consequences that may still flow from them—consequences that not only affect the continuance of the connection between the two countries, but which deeply strike at the prosperity and very existence of both? When such strong and obvious reasons evidently exist for entering into an investigation of these means, were that investigation even to be proposed only by a simple individual of this House, would it not have been more proper and decorous to point out some other plan that might appear equally feasible and effectual, or, at least, to hear what was the nature of the plan to be proposed, rather than pass it over with contempt? and coming, as it now does, from the highest authority, can we reject it in a man-

ner which could scarcely be practised with regard to the most trivial and ordinary motion that could be made in this House?

I am, however, far from being disposed to deny that the conduct of my honourable friend proceeds from the dictates of true patriotism, from a sincere and anxious regard for what he conceives to be the interest of Ireland. I, Sir, though not so nearly connected with that country, still feel the most ardent zeal for its interests and happiness: but, in my opinion it would have been more consistent, not only with the love which my honourable friend professes for his native country, but also more reconcileable with the duty which he owes both to that and to this country, to point out what might have escaped His Majesty's Ministers in their earnest endeavours to hit upon some effectual remedy for the evils that confessedly exist in Ireland, or, at least, to have waited in the first instance, to know what are the particulars of that measure, which he is so anxious the House should regret without hearing. My honourable friend and the House must surely feel with how much anxiety they ought to look towards Ireland. The object is, indeed, most important; it is not the making of a provincial regulation, not the adjusting an internal difference, not the arrangement of a plan for the balancing of parties—the object is nothing less than to secure Ireland to us and to herself, and thereby to promote the happiness and security of the whole empire.

In default, then, of any plan which my honourable friend's sagacity might devise, I must look to the collected sense of Ireland itself, and see what are the opinions on this important subject, entertained by those of that country who are acknowledged to be the most enlightened and best instructed, and who are most thoroughly acquainted with all its interests, both local and general. If these opinions were consulted and collected, I do not hesitate to assert that they will be found to favour the measure now in contemplation, and to pronounce it by far the least objectionable that could be devised; and here, Sir, I beg leave to disclaim any intention of availing myself of what my honourable friend has represented to be the ambiguous and equivocal wording of His Majesty's message—and to declare plainly and fairly, that the measure, which I understand to be recommended for your consideration, is no other than an Incorporating Legislative Union between the two kingdoms. In recommending then to the House to take this measure of an Union into their most serious consideration, I should even be willing to put the Rebellion out of the question. Rebellion can only be put down by force. But by what means are the agitations to be allayed, and the discords that rend that unhappy country to be silenced or reconciled?

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These party discords are well described in a pamphlet which my honourable friend has thought proper to treat with much harshness, and which he attributes to an honourable Member of the Irish Administration. My honourable friend has treated as absurd the arguments contained in this work that the Union might be advantageous in an equal degree to opposite seats, and hostile interests. For my part, Sir, I confess I can see nothing absurd in the argument. It seems to me not only possible, but highly probable that both Protestant and Catholic might gain by an arrangement which would gratify the ambition of the one, without endangering the safety of the other. That such could be the effect of an Union, or rather that such is expected and acknowledged to be the probable effect of it, I am warranted in concluding by reference to the different claims and objections upon which the Catholics and Protestants stand opposed to each other at present. I prefer arguing from what each party has said for itself, to stating any opinion of my own, as to the propriety or expediency of giving or withholding what remains to be given to the Catholics, while Ireland continues separate from Great Britain. For the opinion of the Protestant party on this head, I will beg permission to quote a gentleman, a warm advocate for the Protestant Ascendancy, whose book I have lately read with more pleasure and more instruction than any other that has been published upon the subject of Ireland. I speak, Sir, of the ability and ingenuity of the work. I beg to be understood as giving no opinion upon the questions argued in it. The gentleman to whom I refer, is Dr. Duigenan. This gentleman's book, in answer to Mr. Grattan, contains, in my mind, the most complete statement of the causes and nature of the present distractions of Ireland. It is not only a very ingenious but a very learned work, (if that were any farther recommendation to it), it more completely demolishes his antagonist, than any controversial work that I remember ever to have read. I quote Dr. Duigenan's work with the less prejudice, as he is one of the few persons who had written upon the subject of Irish affairs of late without giving a distinct opinion for or against an *Union*.

Dr. Duigenan is well known to be decidedly hostile to the pretensions of the Catholics; he insists upon the necessity of their continued exclusion from a share in the Legislature, or in any of the great offices of the State from which they are at present excluded, but confesses at the same time that that necessity of exclusion would be done away by the adoption of some plan similar to that proposed in His Majesty's most gracious message. He states it as an unavoidable alternative, either that such a plan—that is, a plan of Union

must be adopted, or that some other must be devised for the fortification of the Protestant ascendancy.

This fortification Dr. Duigenan would fain build on the re-enactment of the Popery Code ; but he admits that this would be unnecessary in case of an Union between the two countries. According to him one or other of these alternatives must be adopted. Here, therefore, we have the creed of the Protestant party ; it appears that they are willing to adopt an Union, or in failure of it, to continue a struggle for every thing that was dear to them in rights and pre-eminence, and in religion.

Ask now the other, the Catholic party, and what is their answer? Why, " let us have a Union, or a continued struggle for that which you have hitherto denied us, viz. a repeal of the remainder of the Penal Code." Here, then, are two parties in opposition to each other, who agree in one common opinion. And surely if any middle term can be found to assuage their animosities and to heal their discords, and reconcile their jarring interests, it should be eagerly and instantly seized and applied. That an Union is that middle term, appears the more probable when we recollect that the Popery Code took its rise after a proposal for an Union ; which proposal came from Ireland, but which was rejected by the British Government. This rejection produced the Popery Code. If an Union were therefore acceded to, the re-adoption of the Popery Code would be unnecessary. If it was in consequence of the rejection of an Union, at a former period, that the laws against Popery were enacted, it is fair to conclude, that an Union would render a similar code unnecessary ; that an Union would satisfy the friends of the Protestant ascendancy, without passing laws against the Catholics, and without maintaining those which are yet in force. Unless, then, some plan less liable to these objections is suggested, and better calculated to remedy the existing diseases of Ireland, there is a presumption in favour of that which persons best acquainted with the interests of Ireland, and best informed respecting the contentions that now disturb its internal tranquillity, are inclined to countenance and adopt.

But then it is contended, there is something in the present crisis which render this an improper period to propose this measure. This surely is strange reasoning. If an Union would quiet the agitation of that country, and restore it to rest, why should we wait till the struggle was over before we administer the remedy? Surely, if two combatants could be parted, it would be wrong to postpone the interference till the battle was over. Some gentlemen, indeed, are so fond of a boxing match, that they had rather see it fought out,

than that the parties should be separated ; but when it is recollected that the parties in this contest are two great national divisions, and that the prize they are contending for is the existence of the Government and the connection between the two Countries, it surely must be a rash fondness for the sport, that would delay for a moment the plan of interference and reconciliation. What else is there in the circumstances of the present time which renders the measure improper ? It cannot be that the continued efforts of France for the subjugation of Ireland have been detected and defeated ;—because whatever delicacy there might exist in interfering between two national parties, there can be none in preserving Ireland from France.

It is still the avowed design of France to attempt an invasion of Ireland, and to complete a separation of it from Great Britain ; and surely my honourable friend is not disposed to bar any thing that may effectually interfere between France and her intended prey ? Is he for waiting till France shall fit out another fleet, and disembark another army in Ireland, to meet with the same fate that attended her former rashness and audacity, before he would endeavour to reconcile and unite all parties ; and thus consolidate the interests and the resources, and the strength of the whole empire ? But something is insinuated of the deliberations of Ireland being influenced and intimidated by the armed force now in the country.

My honourable friend has strongly insisted upon the intimidation which the presence of that armed force is likely to impress on the public mind in Ireland. It is by promoting such an Union of interests and affections, as this measure will ensure that we may hope to remove the necessity of keeping a large armed force in Ireland ; and by removing that necessity, my honourable friend would remove one of the objects of his own censure and complaint.

But, in truth, the effects of that intimidation which my honourable friend so much apprehended, are not easy to discover ; it surely does not seem to affect either the liberty of speech, or the liberty of the press ; both of which have been pretty freely indulged in on the present subject. Every gentleman, I believe, is acquainted with the circumstance of several persons in Ireland having declared their sentiments on the subject freely, and without any appearance of being intimidated by an armed force. A very respectable gentleman in Ireland, who fills the same situation which you, Sir, fill in this country with so much credit, and so much advantage to this House and to the Public, has availed himself of the opportunity of delivering those sentiments out of doors which he could not do within, in a manner that does not, favour of intimidation on *one* side of the

question at least. But God forbid that such intimidation should prevail. It is natural, indeed, that Dublin, under the influence of the first impression, and of the first ardour that has been kindled by the agitation of a question so materially involving its peculiar interests, should be warm, if not intemperate, in the expression of its sentiments. Dublin is as yet loud in its reprobation of the measure; but other places of note and celebrity in Ireland, places that stand as high in commercial importance, are on the contrary as forward in bestowing upon it their most marked and decided approbation.

There is one topic in the speech of my honourable friend which has struck me with no small surprise, and that is, the panegyric which he delivered upon the vigilance and resolution evinced by the Irish Parliament in detecting the late conspiracy, and in crushing the late Rebellion. Such compliments to the Irish Parliament, from that side of the House, I was not prepared to expect, much less was prepared to hear that the armed force in Ireland was to be employed to overawe the proceedings of a Parliament, to whose vigilance and activity co operating with, and watching over the employment of that very force, for some months past, I am ready to say that the salvation of Ireland is to be ascribed. Is it then the Parliament in Ireland that English soldiers are to coerce and restrain? A Parliament fully armed with every constitutional power to control that or any other army? These, Sir, are insinuations against which I must loudly and pointedly protest. They are insinuations which, if not timely met and refuted, when they get abroad, would assume the form of broad assertions; and I should be now glad to hear if there is any man in this House, or out of it, who will take upon himself to assert, that the Irish Parliament is to debate under the immediate intimidation of English troops?

Is there a man in existence who believes, that if such an intimidation was attempted, the Irish Parliament, with the powers which the Constitution has vested in their hands, would proceed to discuss a question under the terror of an armed force.

But, Sir, my honourable friend wandered from the limits to which he promised to confine his observations, when he thought himself at liberty to compare the incorporation of the two Legislatures, with the incorporations made by France for the farther aggrandisement of her already gigantic dominions. In what possible point of view can such a comparison be instituted between the conduct of the two countries? Does France attempt to incorporate other countries for the purpose of extending their common commercial interests? Or have the French been the authors, not of contri-

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butions and confiscations, but of means of wealth and prosperity to the incorporated countries? And have they only required of them to bear a common share in common terms, for the defence and advancement of a common cause? Do the countries which they endeavour to incorporate, resemble France in constitution and in law? Do they contain persons who speak the same language, who are attached to the same customs, who are linked together by the ties of affinity and blood? If not, where is the comparison between the state of the countries which France has chose to incorporate, and that which exists between Great Britain and Ireland? Where is the analogy between such discordant connections, and one between two countries united already by the closest ties of friendship, by blood, by the same species of Government, both obeying the same Sovereign, and enjoying the same Constitution?

Is there any Irish Protestant, however anxious and apprehensive of any interference on the part of Great Britain, which might shake what they considered as the only sure foundations of the Protestant ascendancy;—is there any Irish Catholic,—however galled and angry at the exclusion of his seat from Parliament, and from a few offices of public trust,—however anxious for Catholic Emancipation (as it is called)—who found on these, their partial grievances and general dislike to the British Constitution? Have we as yet found those who would tell us, “Take away your boasted Constitution? It does not speak our language; it is not congenial to our inveterate habits; it does not accord with the usual tone of our feelings?” No; none, undoubtedly, except those of whom I am loath to speak as part of the People of Ireland, the traitors, who have attempted the subversion of that Constitution which we cherish, and a dissolution of that connection on which depend the safety, the interests, the prosperity, and the existence of the two kingdoms.

The most strenuous friends of reform in Ireland have frequently said, that they wanted only to be brought nearer to the perfection of England; and desired that they might enjoy the substantial blessings of the Constitution; that they might be blest, not with a mock splendor under which they could neither enjoy security, nor thrive in prosperity, but the real, inspiring, and enlivening sun-shine of English liberty. Ireland, they know and feel, would, indeed, be the paradise of real blessings, if British connection could be extended there in a manner which might bring about a resemblance between the situation of the people there and in this country.

But among all these people whom the French had sucked into the vortex of their despotism, was there one who wished for the

Constitution offered to them? Did the people of Piedmont, for instance, tell them, "We love your liberty and your constitution; let us share the blessings of both;" did they say, "We are tired of a King; give us your Five Directors—we dislike the ensigns of Royalty—give us a tri-coloured cockade; we dislike our Government; take away our King, his family, and those friends who have supported him, and who would have prompted him to exertion:" No; the People of Piedmont have said no such thing. Let the House but recollect what passed in Piedmont, in the last act of the dreadful tragedy the French had performed in that country—a beloved Monarch, for no crime against his People (to use the cant of modern Republicanism), for no breach of faith with his new Allies, was ignominiously driven from his dominions, for no other reason than because the French wanted Piedmont for a retreat for their army in case it should be compelled to retreat from Italy. The unhappy Monarch, as the last degradation of human infamy, was obliged, *on his knees*, to beg the French to let him take his Brother [the Duc d'Aoste] with him, whom the French wanted to keep as a pledge for his good conduct. Good God! to ask a pledge for his good conduct, after they had driven him from his dominions, and forced him, poor, powerless, and degraded, to seek refuge in Sardinia—to compel a Sovereign who had been guilty of no offence, to God or man, to grovel on his knees, and supplicate for mercy and compassion at the bloody hands of the Agents of the Directory! Let the House consider of this scene, and then let them pronounce whether, whatever be the result of this question, it was candid to treat it in such a manner, to compare the discussion of two free and independent States, upon a plan calculated for their mutual benefit, with the unprecedented tyranny of France.

In one view, indeed, Sir, the incorporations of France ought to be wholly out of our consideration. It is upon a just and founded apprehension of the designs of France upon Ireland, that His Majesty has called upon the Parliament of both kingdoms to devise the means of giving additional strength and solidity to that part of the empire, which at present is most open to attack, and of communicating to Ireland in the fullest manner, the power, the vigour, and the stability of Great Britain. If Ireland obviously is not in a condition to defend itself against the threatened attacks of foreign power, and consequently stands in need of the assistance of Great Britain, it is a question certainly of serious importance, whether that assistance may not be best given by an incorporation of the two countries. The measure, however, is not forced—God forbid that it should be forced—upon Ireland; but given for the consideration,

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for the mature and deliberate judgement of the Irish Parliament, who alone are competent finally to reject or to adopt it.—Be it, however, our consolation, at least, if most unhappily for Ireland, most unhappily for the empire, the measure should not be adopted, that the British Parliament has done its part towards carrying it into effect—the recommendation of the common Sovereign of both countries, towards knitting together under this paternal Government, the disjointed members of this mighty empire—mighty even in its present state—but when inseparably united in all its parts, likely to become invincible, if not unassailable.

For we are to remember, that it is not the local or military weakness alone of Ireland that has marked her out as a prey to the arms and intrigues of our enemy. Do not let us think, that if we rescue Ireland from subjugation by those arms, and from subversion by those intrigues, by the measure at present under our contemplation, we are adopting a remedy disproportioned to the danger, or erecting permanent fortifications against an attack that is but temporary, and may be felt no more.

Much as we have been in the habit of considering the nature of the French Revolution, and painfully as it has been brought home to our minds and feelings, by the experience of those tremendous calamities which have been occasioned by it throughout the nations which surround us—little, indeed, have we been benefited by the experience of the sufferings of others; and imperfect, indeed, has been our considerations of their nature and extent—if we have not been taught that the moral influence of the French Revolution is not likely speedily to pass away—that even if we could suppose peace to be restored to Europe, and the Kingdoms whose heads have been bound by the storm, or even the States which it has torn up by the roots, to be replaced in their former political situation—even under this supposition (improbable enough God knows) the latent mischief, the principle of future convulsions in the moral and political world, would remain. Where is the country, whose state of society is more adapted to receive and cherish, and mature the principles of the French Revolution—principles which go to array the physical force of the lower orders of the people, against the educated and governing parts of the community, to arm poverty against property, labour against privilege, and each class of life against its superior, than a country like Ireland, where the inhabitants are in general poor and uncivilized, and where religious distinctions prevail to such an extent? In such a country the seeds of the French Revolution must be sown deep indeed! It is not, I am afraid, the act of a day or a year which will destroy its baneful influence. The

Government of France know, that wherever their principles are scattered, it will be difficult to eradicate them; they know that they had taken root in Ireland. Is it not then likely that they will attempt to foster and support them? It is to put an end to those hopes of our enemies—it is to put Ireland out of danger, both from foreign attack and domestic disturbance and distraction—it is, in every point of view, to ameliorate her condition that this measure is proposed. A measure, the necessity of which, arising from the causes which I have stated, argues, however, no blame to the People, or to the Government of Ireland. The fault is in the nature of things: in the present disposition of property, and division of the classes of society in that country. They want commerce, they want capital, they want a generally diffused spirit of industry and order; they want those classes of men who connect the upper and lower orders of society, and who thereby blend together and harmonize the whole. But it is not an act of Parliament that would effect these great and beneficial objects; no, it is only by a connection with a country which has capital, which has commerce, which has that middle class of men, of whom skill and enterprise, and sober orderly habits, are the peculiar characteristics; it is by such a connection alone, diffusing these blessings, diffusing the means of wealth, and the example and encouragement of industry throughout the Sister Kingdom, it is by such a connection that so great and beneficial a change must be effected. We have seen partial remedies tried—but, as might be expected, with partial success. We have seen Manufactures flourish—but the Cottage, which borders on the Manufactory, remaining in wretchedness. There remains one great experiment to be tried. If from the concurrent testimony of opposite sects and parties, we are warranted in believing, that it may be made with advantage to all, if in addition to the immediate safety of Ireland, and the strengthening of the empire, it promise to produce in the interior of that country consequences so beneficial to its internal prosperity and happiness—surely we have heard no arguments to-night which ought to prevent the House from entering upon a discussion of the subject.

I trust that no such arguments will prevent the subject from being discussed with the same temper, the same views, and the same anxiety, to bring it to a happy conclusion in Ireland. My honourable friend has, indeed, stated, with regard to the mode of proposing this subject in Ireland, that, besides force, other means had been resorted to. Government has done that which seems to my honourable friend most alarming, most horrible—they have actually turned a gentleman out of his office. My honourable friend presses

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this argument very strongly, and seems to think it must have a great effect upon us who sit on this bench to talk of turning a man out of office. But what, in fact, does the whole argument amount to? Sir John Parnell, undoubtedly a man of great worth and abilities, entertained an opinion hostile to this measure. The opinion of such a man was certainly entitled to respect, but to nothing more than those of persons of equal worth and talents. What are the taunts which we hear thrown against gentlemen on this side of the House, if there happens to be the slightest difference of opinion among them, even though it should be upon an indifferent and unimportant subject. If, Sir, the Opposition in Ireland were as acute as my honourable friend, Sir John Parnell would have had a pleasant time of it, if he had gone down to the House a Chancellor of the Exchequer, differing as he did from Government, upon so important a question; and would, in truth, have been an impeachment upon the sincerity of Government, if they had so risked the loss of a question on which they conceived the welfare of the two countries to depend. Sir John Parnell, therefore, ceased to be Chancellor of the Exchequer.

On what other circumstances then, connected with the time, or with the manner of bringing forward this proposition, is it contended that the Parliament or People of Ireland should receive it with jealousy and suspicion? If, indeed, this proposition had come, after a series of attempts on the part of Great Britain, to injure and depress her sister country, to check her progress in commercial prosperity, to discourage her advances to wealth and civilization, to crush and control her legislative independence, and to over-rule all attempts at the improvement of the Laws and Constitution, it might justly be entertained with distrust, and proceeded upon with hesitation. If, seeing and deploring the present situation of Ireland, Great Britain had yet suggested no remedy for them herself, and had thrown difficulties in the way of what had been suggested by Ireland, and had then come forward with this as the first offer of her advice and assistance, Ireland might, perhaps, ask where the spirit of benevolence had slept so long, and why she had never before experienced the anxious care of England, until it was now extended to them in the first instance, accompanied by a proposal for an Union? But was that the case? Was this the first remedy that England had proposed, or had she ever refused assistance to Ireland? It has been said, that for the space of three hundred years we had oppressed Ireland. It is happy, however, for the present generation, that it has but little of the guilt of that oppression to answer for. Surely, for the last twenty years, the conduct of England to-

wards Ireland has been a series of concessions. Ireland desired an octennial Parliament; it was granted. They wished for an independent Legislature, and their wishes were complied with. They desired a free trade, and it was given to them. A very large body of the people of Ireland prayed for a repeal of part of the Penal Code, which they thought oppressed them. The English Government interposed, with an opinion strongly pronounced in favour of their petition, and its interference was successful.

But it has been said, that nothing has been done for Ireland but what she had extorted, and what she had a *right* to demand: these past favours, therefore, are represented as no proof of kindness. But I would ask, Sir, whether an independent country can demand to trade to the colonies of another independent country, as a matter of right? I wish to know whether an independent country could insist upon sending her linens to this country, under advantageous circumstances, as a *right*? Whether an independent country could demand the liberty of sending her goods into this country, in order to be re-exported with English bounties, as a matter of right? It was undoubtedly proper that these advantages should be given to Ireland, because the prosperity of Ireland is the prosperity of England; but they were not privileges upon which they could insist as matters of right. But here, Sir, let me not be misapprehended: I do not say this as reproaching Ireland with the gratitude which she owes to England, but merely to shew the good disposition with which England has, for a long time past, acted towards Ireland.

Sir, it is not my intention to go into any detail upon the subject of this great measure at present—nor to state the nature of the terms upon which an Union may best be concluded. That statement, whenever it comes, it is fit that the House should hear from higher authority than mine. And this is by no means the stage of the business, at which it can come with effect and propriety. The object which I have in view, Sir, in what I have taken the liberty to address to the House, is, to entreat them to recollect, that in adopting the amendment of my honourable friend, and refusing to go into a consideration of the address, they would put an end to the only great and comprehensive view that had ever been taken in this House of the affairs of Ireland. The plans proposed respecting Ireland, except in the case of the Irish propositions, were in general to answer some immediate purpose, to catch at a little popularity by decrying one party, and extolling another—and by echoing in this country the distractions and disturbances of that, whenever it has so happened that the affairs of this country have furnished no immediate ground for popular declamation.

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It is a little curious to consider what was the conduct of that party when in Government towards Ireland, from whom the Opposition to this measure comes. Did those gentlemen, when they had the power in their hands, take a great and comprehensive view of the state of Ireland?—No; when they were proposing a measure respecting Ireland, they overlooked three-fourths of its inhabitants. It was then said by those gentlemen, that the work was done, and the troubles of Ireland appeased; and yet, in their plan, the word *Catholic* never once occurred.

Such was the wisdom, the comprehension, the grandeur of conception, that marked the boasted final adjustment of 1782!

And now, Sir, observe the manner in which every thing that is attempted to be done for the safety of Ireland, and for the benefit of both countries, is treated—What are the weapons by which every thing that my right honourable friend proposes, with regard to Ireland, is attempted to be beaten down? What are the substitutes recommended for every measure which he would take for saving and tranquillizing Ireland? Why, Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform. How came the final Adjusters not to think sixteen years ago of Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform? With respect to the latter, the honourable gentleman, who was then Minister, directed the Lord Lieutenant to put down that question at all events; and as to Catholic Emancipation, not one word was said about it.

Sir, it is little praise of the measure now proposed for our consideration to say, that it will be more perfect and comprehensive than the final adjustment of 1782. The question, indeed, which I conjure the House not to refuse to consider, is not a question of slight importance—it is a question upon which depends the safety of one member of the empire, and the happiness of the whole.

I conjure the House to recollect, What is the hazard in which Ireland stands, and what have been our fears and our anxiety for her preservation? If in estimating the splendid victories which have illustrated the naval annals of this country, and spread through the world the terror of her fame, we have ranked even with the most brilliant those by which Ireland has been saved—let the same sentiment induce us to receive with kindness, and to discuss with a sincere desire to bring it to perfection, a measure which is calculated to perpetuate to Ireland the safety, which is the fruit of these victories, and to procure to her solid and permanent blessings far beyond the power of any victories to bestow!—Sitting here as we do in tranquillity and security, protected by a powerful and energetic Government, in the bosom of a consenting and united

people—with no invasion to resist, no rebellion to coerce or to appease—let us feel for the distractions and disquietudes of a country, which the ties of nature, of friendship, of common language, manners, and interests, of laws and constitution similar to our own, bind so indissolubly to ourselves, that separation would be to each, and to both of us, destruction. And let us, at least, not refuse to consider of a question which involves in itself the best, perhaps the only means, which can at once and for ever remove the dangers, and quiet the dissensions of Ireland, while they cement the connection, which it is equally essential to both countries to strengthen.

Mr. JONES would not follow the honourable gentleman through all the mazes and windings of his metaphorical confusion. He saw no necessity for bringing forward this measure. He had already declared it to be his opinion, that the Rebellion in Ireland ought not to be considered as suppressed while there was a man in arms in the country against the Government; but instead of crushing the Rebellion, the measure which was now suggested would have the very opposite tendency. It would promote the distractions of the country, and extend that system of horrible rapine which unhappily had too long prevailed. Something had been said about French measures and French practices. To these it was well known he was no friend; and he could not help saying, that the present measure appeared to him to possess all the characteristic marks of French fraternity. He must beg pardon of the House for detaining them. Perhaps a few plain things, such as he could say, would not be very agreeable after the fine speech of the honourable gentleman; but he hoped he should be indulged with the liberty of making a few observations. The honourable gentleman had acknowledged that the Irish Parliament suppressed the late Rebellion—now, if the Irish Parliament was capable of this, why disfranchise that Parliament? Why say, you shall sit no longer; but you may send 100 Members here? Was it likely that such a representation could manage the affairs of Ireland better than its own Parliament? The next point he should take notice of was, what has been said about military coercion. He was far from supposing that troops were sent to Ireland for the purpose of over-awing the deliberations of the Parliament of the country; but certainly while they were there, they might be considered as having the effect of an intimidation with regard to the people at large. Indeed, whether a Union was a good or bad measure, the present was a most unfavourable moment for proposing it; and being firmly of this opinion, he felt it his duty to support the amendment.

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Mr. SHERIDAN said, the honourable gentleman (Mr. Canning) had made a very eloquent speech, which he confessed he had heard with much satisfaction, because it applied so little to the question. Much had been said with regard to his determination to shut his ears to the King's message, and to go into no inquiry upon the state of Ireland. He had not stated that the Irish Parliament deliberated under intimidation; but he had said that there was a kind of negative intimidation, while so great a military force existed in the country; and that Ireland was placed in a situation in which she could not help herself. Offence had been taken at the term French Incorporation, and it was said that the countries which the French compelled to unite with them, were not admitted to the participation of such advantages as Ireland would be with Great Britain; but the question was not a comparison of blessings, but of the mode in which the measure was to be carried into effect; would it be said that this country was to compel Ireland to agree to an Union, because we were certain that it was for her advantage? He should still contend that the influence used by Government in dismissing persons who held public situations from the service of the public, was an intimidation which would operate powerfully over the country. While such conduct was adopted, the inference was plain, that the measure could not be fairly and impartially considered; and that if it were carried, it would prove the foundation of future discord and contention.

Mr. CANNING spoke in explanation.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said—Sir, after the inclination which has been manifested by the House to come to a decision on the question before them, I should feel it my duty to offer some apology for rising to delay that decision, but as some difference of opinion is likely to take place in the minds of gentlemen, and the point under consideration is so intimately connected with the safety and prosperity of the British empire, though I do not think it necessary to enter fully into the important details which the subject naturally suggests, I cannot pass over with indifference several topics which have been alluded to in the course of the honourable gentleman's speech. The honourable gentleman, in bring forward his amendment, has appeared to me to furnish but one argument in support of the conclusion which he labours to establish, namely, that there is no power which can make the result of the deliberation for adjusting the reciprocal interests of both countries effectual. He has taken upon himself the task of denying to the Parliament of either kingdom the right of incorporating one country with another. With respect to the publication which he has undertaken to refute,

that is a subject to which the House cannot attend ; but how does the honourable gentleman's denial of the right of the Parliaments of both kingdoms stand ? If the Parliament of Ireland has no right to incorporate itself with the Legislature of this country, without the sense of the people of Ireland, as little has the Parliament of Great Britain a right to follow the same measure with that of Ireland, as little had the Parliament of Scotland a right to agree to the terms of the Union which had been effected, as little had the Parliament of England a right to ratify that Union, under which England has so eminently flourished, under which our laws and liberties have prospered, have been extended and confirmed, in defiance of every check and obstacle ; under which Great Britain has increased in opulence, in power, and glory, and has become at once the admiration and envy of the world. If there be any truth, or any consistency in the honourable gentleman's denial of the right which he challenges, then all the solid and beneficial establishments which have been carried into effect since the period of the Union, must give way and fall to the ground. Even the honourable gentleman would, according to his own argument, stand here unauthorised, unqualified to deliver his sentiments in this House. For if we admit his position to be just, it evidently follows, that there is no one act which has been performed by us for these 90 years past, in which we have acted legitimately and constitutionally ; and, in fact, we could not at this moment sit here as a legislative body. I cannot devise by what means, or by what ingenious resources, the honourable gentleman can support his statement, and it seems that his allies are hitherto unknown. I have, however, learned from the newspapers, that the honourable gentleman has at least one ally in his very extraordinary proposition. A certain person has publicly declared, that every citizen of both countries should come forward and deliver his opinion on the present occasion ; and that without the sense of the aggregate bodies of the kingdom, the Parliament of Great Britain could not discuss nor determine the present momentous question. According to this plan, which appears to coincide with the sentiments of the honourable gentleman, every citizen was to stand forth with his reasons, and vote in numerical progression, and the Legislature were, in the mean time, patiently to wait for the result of the whole. If we are to go back to the elements of Jacobinism, I must admit the argument of the honourable gentleman to be just ; and we are consequently no longer a Parliament. But I must do him the justice to say, that I am persuaded he entertains no such opinion ; and if he does not, there is of course an end to that topic. With respect to the competence of Parlia-

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ment to carry the measure into effect, there does not exist a doubt ; and if the competence of either or both Parliaments be fully admitted, let us see how stands the question in your hands, as well as the amendment of the honourable gentleman. He complains, Sir, that the address of thanks to His Majesty was moved by my right honourable friend near me, and seconded by me as a matter of course. But why did we pursue that conduct? Was it because we were not aware of the difficulties attending it ; because we were not apprised of the indispensable necessity of mature and minute investigation? No, Sir! but because we did not think it right to agitate a question of such transcendent importance on the bare mention of it ; because we conceived that it would be premature to bring forward for discussion, a topic, the outlines of which were unknown ; because we could not, consistently with our duties to the public, agree to submit to consideration, a subject so deeply interesting in its relation and operations, until it was stated fairly and openly, in all its various details, to the House. But the honourable gentleman has gone farther, and talked of a wish to carry it by surprise. I do not hesitate to say, that if any blame be imputable to us, it is that of having acted with too much caution. It has been distinctly recommended from the Throne, to adopt such salutary measures as might improve and perpetuate a connection essential to the common security and interests of both countries. We only stated, in conformity to that communication, the time of laying before the House the materials necessary for forming an opinion, and added, that a proper interval would take place before we took the sense of Parliament. I certainly thought that the honourable gentleman would have candidly allowed the fairness of our conduct, and have done justice to our desire, so clearly ascertained, of treating the subject with all the importance and deliberation to which it is so peculiarly entitled. In short, the question now is, shall we, after the expiration of a proper interval, discuss and come to a determination upon the subject ; or shall we in the first instance, and in the mere outset of the business, without taking a just review of the considerations on both sides, without entering into the essential points that are connected with, and must influence our decision, positively declare, that the measure is either unnecessary to the security and happiness of Ireland, or so impracticable in its operation, as to prevent any hopes of realizing it? With regard to the amendment, I shall say a few words presently. It is enough for us to say, we bring forward a proposition in our opinion suitable to the present state of Ireland. We do no more. We do not ask for immediate discussion. But, Sir, what is the honourable gentleman's conduct?

He says, without considering the subject in any point of view as it relates to this country or to Ireland, "I will enter upon no inquiry whatever." Now, Sir, he is bound, according to this system of acting, to make out to our conviction, either that the state of Ireland is so completely satisfactory, that we may repose with safety, and that, consequently the proposed arrangement is superfluous, or it is incumbent on him to point out some other mode of a more salutary and more efficacious nature. Has he then, I am authorised to demand, made out any such case? I answer, no! Does Ireland stand in need of a remedy? I have heard nothing but complaints of the miserable and distressed situation of Ireland from the honourable gentleman and his party for a long time past. They have reiterated and studiously expatiated upon the wretched condition to which that country was reduced; they have bitterly inveighed against the mistakes and errors of its Government; they have described in the most alarming terms the horrors which it was condemned to suffer; they have anxiously started difficulties and raised objections against every word that went to extenuate the painful distresses which they related. What has the honourable gentleman seen in the condition of Ireland since that day, to cause so material an alteration in his opinion? What has he discovered since that day to induce him to retract his declarations, and impress him with a conviction that Ireland is so secure, so happy, and so prosperous, as to render every kind of remedy unnecessary? He has seen a Rebellion raging with inveterate fury, and aiming a deadly blow at the connection between that country and Great Britain. He has seen that Rebellion crushed, and the Government of Ireland left standing in security. The honourable gentleman seems to forget that he found no difficulty then in blaming the Parliament of Ireland, yet he comes forward now, and is as profuse of his praise on it, as he was before lavish in his censures. He cannot, therefore, have seen any thing since that period to justify this extraordinary and unaccountable dereliction of sentiment. The evils and calamities with which Ireland is afflicted lie deep in the situation of the country. They are to be attributed to the manners of its inhabitants, to the state of society, to the habits of the people at large, to the unequal distribution of property, to the want of civilized intercourse, to the jarring discord of party, and above all, to the prejudices of religious sects. The honourable gentleman says, we cannot cure them all in a day. If they could be cured so, they might be cured by the Parliament of Ireland, by Parliamentary Reform, or Catholic Emancipation. But if the deplorable situation of the country can only be cured by gradual, sober, and dispassionate im-

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provement and civilization ; if much of it that is unjustly complained of can only be remedied by the circulation of capital, by the social intercourse naturally flowing from improved trade and commerce, by the diffusion of social habits, by the discrimination of liberal sentiment, by removing party distractions, by suppressing factious associations, by allaying hereditary feuds subsisting between two nations living in the same island, and by the extinction of religious prejudices, we must look to it in the provisions of an independent Legislature removed from the immediate seat of these evils, which shall not be partial to either party, but the fair arbiter and kind parent of both ; which shall not be liable to local influence, nor be subject to popular incitement, and which shall be fully competent to make head against the lawless inroads of destructive innovation and anarchy. Where then, Sir, is this gradual and effectual remedy to be found, while the Legislature remains in that country, and must, from the parts which compose it, partake of the spirit of either party ? If, therefore, the honourable gentleman looks to Ireland for a Legislature calculated to apply a radical cure to the calamities which are manifest, he will not find it there. If he looks to the imperfection of the Constitution of Ireland as I admit, does he contend that the Parliament of Ireland is as well adapted to have that degree of connection and Union with the great mass of the people as the Parliament of Great Britain ? Will he seriously maintain that the desired remedy is to be hazarded in that country ? The wildest speculation, the most extravagant flight of modern political theory in all its new-fangled doctrines, attempted in any other country, would be more likely to be crowned with success, and more reconcileable to reason than such a proposition. It would upon every principle of common sense be superior to it. I do not deny that even the deformed resemblance of the British Constitution is superior to any proceeding from the new system ; but the imperfection of the Irish Constitution is admitted, and to that must be added the complicated grievances and defects in the state of the country at large. With respect to the want of a diffusion of property, to the extraordinary disparity of rank, and to the scanty means of social improvement, all producing in a proportionate degree misery in one extreme and oppression in the other, how can these grievances be remedied but by a closer connection with Great Britain, which is superior to every other nation in every thing that constitutes the independence, wealth, and civilization of a state ? The situation of Ireland must also be remedied by the influx of capital and the circulation of wealth, and whence are these necessary ingredients to be supplied but by assimilating it with Great Britain, which enjoys

a portion of practical blessings superior to any other country in the world? If these statements be correct, I am authorized in maintaining, that according to the principles advanced by the honourable gentleman himself, nothing can tend more completely to redress the unhappy and distracted state of Ireland, than uniting, blending, and consolidating its interests and views with those of Great Britain. Therefore, Sir, upon the honourable gentleman's principles it is not only a measure worthy of consideration, but a specific remedy for the specific evils of which he complains. He does not scruple to tell us, and wishes Parliament to record, that the final adjustment with Ireland in 1782, has been found incompetent to settle every difference; and he told us yesterday, that he wished to perpetuate the connection between Great Britain and Ireland; but I am not content with saying, that the connection shall be perpetuated, and that Ireland shall form a part of the British empire, but I wish she should participate in all the blessings, enjoy her just share of all the distinguished happiness of every part of the British empire, and consolidate the strength and energy of the whole. I do not merely say let Ireland be united, let her be blended with us, but let her partake of every solid benefit, of every eminent advantage that can result from such an incorporation. The question then is, how are these great objects to be obtained; when the connection with Ireland was something more than a name, when that connection was ascertained, and the Imperial Parliament of this country exercised a supremacy over Ireland, it did happen that during that period the narrow policy of Great Britain, influenced with views of trade and commercial advantages, tainted and perverted with selfish motives, treated Ireland with partiality and neglect, and never looked upon her growth and prosperity as the growth and prosperity of the empire at large. I reprobated, as much as the honourable gentleman that narrow-minded policy as mischievous and pregnant with the most fatal consequences to both kingdoms. Thus a system radically defective existed, but another was substituted in its place. One branch, that of the Executive Power, was left the same in both countries; but there were also left two independent Parliaments without any permanent tie between them, and that at a time when every honest Englishman and every honest Irishman sincerely wished the connection might be drawn closer. The countries were left in a situation of intimacy which the breath of accident might at all times destroy. They were liable to be separated by a thousand accidents, which no human foresight or wisdom could prevent. It is now the duty of both Legislatures to render their happiness mutual and permanent.

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I am now, Sir, about to notice that which has been alluded to by the honourable gentleman as a final adjustment ; and I can undertake to state, that this final adjustment was made under the pretence of redressing existing grievances, without looking to future consequences, or taking a general and necessary view of circumstances—it was dictated by the spirit of momentary popularity, and was not founded in the solid interests of the country. Having created two distinct Parliaments equally able and competent to decide and dictate on questions of peace and war, on all points of trade and commerce—it left them as divided in all material points, about which nations may contest, as any two Powers on the Continent. That such was the issue of that arrangement cannot now be denied, and I can therefore maintain, without incurring the risque of contradiction, that there is no reason whatever for calling it a final adjustment. Such, however, was the boasted achievement of the great patriots who took the lead in the emancipation of Ireland. The fabric which they had raised was popular ; but the very men who raised it knew it was not sound. They looked at their work, and they saw that it was imperfect. One of these great patriots was gratified with a large donation from his country, and the other was celebrated in the publications of the day. When the act was passed, which gave independance to Ireland, I think it necessary to observe, that it was accompanied by a resolution which contained a salutary provision. The resolution stated, that it was the opinion of the House, that the connection between both kingdoms should be consolidated by future measures or regulations founded upon the basis of mutual consent. The following Extracts were read from the Journals of the House.

MESSAGE PRESENTED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY
MR. FOX, SECRETARY OF STATE, ON THE 9TH OF APRIL,
1782.

“ GEORGE R.

“ *His Majesty being concerned to find that discontents and jealousies are prevailing among his loyal subjects in Ireland, upon matters of great weight and importance, earnestly recommends to this House, to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to such a final adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms.*

G. R.”

1st May, 1782.

Mr. Secretary Fox presented to the House, by His Majesty's command,

Copy of the message to the Houses of Lords and Commons in Ireland, from his Grace the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, delivered the 16th of April, 1782: and also,

Copy of a resolution of the House of Lords in Ireland, Mercurii, 17^o die Aprilis, 1782: and also,

Copy of a resolution of the House of Commons in Ireland, Martis, 16^o die Aprilis, 1782.

And the titles of the said copies were read.

The said copies are as follow, viz.

Copy of the Message to the Houses of Lords and Commons in Ireland, from his Grace the Lord Lieutenant, delivered the 16th of April, 1782.

PORTLAND,

I have it in command from His Majesty to inform this House, that His Majesty being concerned to find that discontents and jealousies are prevailing among his loyal subjects of this country, upon matters of great weight and importance, His Majesty recommends to this House to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to such a final adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to his kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland.

P.

Copy of a Resolution of the House of Lords in Ireland, Mercurii, 17^o die Aprilis, 1782.

Resolved, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, *nemine dissentiente*, That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, to return him our thanks for the most gracious message sent to this House by His Majesty's command, through the medium of his Grace the Lord Lieutenant, and to assure him of our most unshaken loyalty and attachment to His Majesty's person and government, and of the lively sense we entertain of his paternal care of his people in Ireland, in thus inquiring into the discontents and jealousies that subsist amongst them, in order to such final adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to his kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland.

That, thus encouraged by his royal interposition, we shall beg leave, with all duty and affection, to lay before His Majesty the cause of such discontents and jealousies.

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To represent to His Majesty, that his subjects of Ireland are entitled to a free constitution ; that the Imperial Crown of Ireland is inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great Britain, on which connection the happiness of both nations essentially depends ; but that the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct dominion, having a Parliament of her own, the sole Legislature thereof.

That there is no power whatsoever competent to make laws to bind this nation, except the King, Lords, and Commons, of Ireland ; upon which exclusive right of legislation we consider the very essence of our liberties to depend, a right which we claim as the birth-right of the people of Ireland, and which we are determined, in every situation of life, to assert and maintain.

To represent to His Majesty, that we have seen with concern certain claims, both of legislature and judicature, asserted by the Parliament of Great Britain, in an act passed in Great Britain in the sixth year of George the First, intituled, " An Act for the better securing the Dependency of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain : "

That we conceive the said act, and the powers thereby claimed, to be the great and principal causes of the discontents and jealousies that subsist in this kingdom :

To assure His Majesty, that this House considers it as a matter of constitutional right and protection, that all bills which become law should receive the approbation of His Majesty, under the seal of Great Britain ; but we consider the practice of suppressing our bills in the Council of Ireland, or altering them any where, to be a matter which calls for redress :

To represent to His Majesty, that an act intituled, " An Act for the better Accommodation of His Majesty's Forces, " being unlimited in duration, but which, from the particular circumstances of the times, passed into a law, has been the cause of much jealousy and discontent in this kingdom :

That we have thought it our duty to lay before His Majesty these, the principal causes of the discontents and jealousies subsisting in this kingdom :

That we have the greatest reliance on His Majesty's wisdom, the most sanguine expectations from his virtuous choice of a Chief Governor, and the greatest confidence in the wise and constitutional Council His Majesty has adopted :

That we have, moreover, a high sense and veneration for the British character, and do therefore conceive, that the proceedings of this country, founded as they are in right, and supported by constitutional liberty, must have excited the approbation and esteem of

the British nation: That we are the more confirmed in this hope, inasmuch as the people of this kingdom have never expressed a desire to share the freedom of Great Britain, without at the same time declaring their determination to share her fate, standing or falling with the British nation.

Wm. Watts Gayer } Cler.
Edw. Gayer } Parliament.

*Copy of a Resolution of the House of Commons in Ireland, Martis,
16^o die Aprilis, 1782.*

Resolved, That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, to return His Majesty the thanks of this House for his most gracious message to this House, signified by his Grace the Lord Lieutenant: To assure His Majesty of our unshaken attachment to His Majesty's person and government, and of our lively sense of his paternal care, in thus taking the lead to administer content to His Majesty's subjects of Ireland; that thus encouraged by his royal interposition, we shall beg leave, with all duty and affection, to lay before His Majesty the causes of our discontents and jealousies: To assure His Majesty, that his subjects of Ireland are a free people; that the Crown of Ireland is an Imperial Crown, inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great Britain, on which connection the interests and happiness of both nations essentially depend; but that the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom, with a Parliament of her own, the sole Legislature thereof; that there is no body of men competent to make laws to bind this nation, except the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, nor any other Parliament which hath any authority, or power of any sort whatsoever, in this country, save only the Parliament of Ireland: To assure His Majesty, that we humbly conceive, that in this right the very essence of our liberties exist; a right which we, on the part of all the people of Ireland, do claim as their birth-right, and which we cannot yield but with our lives: To assure His Majesty, that we have seen with concern certain claims advanced by the Parliament of Great Britain, in an act, intituled, "An Act for the better securing the Dependancy of Ireland;" an act containing matter entirely irreconcilable to the fundamental rights of this nation; that we consider this act, and the claims it advances, to be the great and principle cause of the discontents and jealousies in this kingdom: To assure His Majesty, that His Majesty's Commons of Ireland do most sincerely wish, that all bills which become law in Ireland should receive the approbation of His Majesty, under the seal of Great Britain; but that yet

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we do consider the practice of suppressing our bills in the Council of Ireland, or altering the same any where, to be another just cause of discontent and jealousy : To assure His Majesty, that an act, intitled, " An Act for the better Accommodation of His Majesty's Forces," being unlimited in duration, and defective in other instances (but passed in that shape from the particular circumstances of the times) is another just cause of discontent and jealousy in this kingdom : That we have submitted these, the principal causes of the present discontent and jealousy in Ireland, and remain in humble expectation of redress ; that we have the greatest reliance on His Majesty's wisdom, the most sanguine expectations from his virtuous choice of a Chief Governor, and great confidence in the wise, auspicious, and constitutional Councils which we see with satisfaction His Majesty has adopted ; that we have moreover a high sense and veneration for the British character, and do therefore conceive, that the proceedings of this country, founded as they are in right, and tempered by duty, must have excited the approbation and esteem, instead of wounding the pride, of the British nation ; and we beg leave to assure His Majesty, that we are the more confirmed in this hope, inasmuch as the people of this kingdom have never expressed a desire to share the freedom of England, without declaring a determination to share her fate likewise, standing and falling with the British nation.

THO. ELLIS, *Cler. Parl. Dom. Com.*

Ordered, That the said copies do lie upon the table, to be perused by the Members of the House.

17th May, 1782.

Resolved, That this House will, immediately, resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to take into consideration His Majesty's most gracious message, of the 9th day of April last, relative to the state of Ireland.

Ordered, That the several papers which were presented to the House, by Mr. Secretary Fox, upon the 1st day of this instant May, be referred to the said Committee.

That the House resolved itself into the said Committee.

Mr. Speaker left the chair.

Mr. Powys took the chair of the Committee.

Mr. Speaker resumed the chair.

Mr. Powys reported from the Committee, that they had come to several resolutions, which they had directed him to report, when the House will please to receive the same.

Ordered, That the report be now received.

Mr. Powys accordingly reported, from the said Committee, the resolutions which the Committee had directed him to report to the House, which he read in his place, and afterwards delivered in at the clerk's table, where the same were read, and are as follow, viz.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Committee, that an act, made in the sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the First, intituled, "An Act for the better securing the Dependancy of the Kingdom of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain," ought to be repealed.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Committee, that it is indispensable to the interests and happiness of both kingdoms, that the connection between them should be established, by mutual consent, upon a solid and permanent basis.

The said resolutions, being severally read a second time, were, upon the question severally put thereupon, agreed to by the House, *nemini contradicenti*.

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a bill for repealing an act made in the sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the First, intituled, "An Act for the better securing the Dependancy of the Kingdom of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain;" and that Mr. Secretary Fox, Mr. Thomas Pitt, Mr. Powys, and Lord John Cavendish, do prepare and bring in the same.

Resolved, That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to take such measures as His Majesty in his royal wisdom shall think most conducive to the establishing, by mutual consent, the connection between this kingdom and the kingdom of Ireland upon a solid and permanent basis.

Ordered, That the address be presented to His Majesty, by such Members of this House as are of His Majesty's most honourable Privy Council.

22d May, 1782.

Mr. Secretary Fox reported to the House, That His Majesty had been attended with the address of this House of Friday last, which His Majesty had been pleased to receive very graciously; and that His Majesty had commanded him to acquaint this House, that he will immediately take such measures as may be most likely to conduce to the establishment of a connection between

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Mr. Chancellor Pitt then proceeded—I have therefore, Sir, the authority of that resolution to prove, that no final adjustment was then made, and nothing has been since attempted to provide for that defective settlement but the partial and inadequate measure of the Irish propositions, which were defeated by the persons who framed the resolution, and who found no substitute in their room. The *onus* of shewing that it was not a final adjustment, lies with those who framed that resolution—I mean with the honourable gentleman and his friends. The *onus* lay with the honourable gentleman to state what means and what resources he had in his mind to answer the pledge given to the country. But, Sir, is there no probable case in which the Legislatures of both kingdoms may differ? Has the honourable gentleman forgotten that one case did arise, and that within the short space of sixteen years? With that experience before my eyes which we foresaw, no arguments can at present be necessary to shew that the possible recurrence of such a case should be precluded. The case to which I allude, is one which has been noticed by the honourable gentleman, but noticed only to be glossed over—I mean the Regency. The difference of principle was evident, for the Irish Parliament decided upon one principle, and the British Parliament upon another. They both led to the appointment of the same person, but that was accidental, for that person must have governed Ireland upon one principle, and England upon another. He would have been Regent in one capacity in one country, and in a capacity directly the reverse in the other. It therefore followed, that the office might, upon grounds equally justifiable, have been vested in two distinct persons. Will any man, with so instructive an example before his eyes, talk with sincerity of a final adjustment? Will any man tell us, that the security of the empire is, in its present view, founded on a permanent basis? In the only war which has taken place since the establishment of Irish independence, the question of mutual interest has been so exactly the same, that I cannot quote any difference of opinion on that head. Fortunately, the only great instance in which two countries could act in opposition had not then occurred; and the local interest of Ireland has, in the present war, been so intimately connected with this kingdom, and her existence and welfare has so much depended upon us, that there is no opportunity of citing a case

of dispute between both nations on the great questions of peace and war. But will the honourable gentleman pretend to maintain, that when the habit of discussing the foreign relations of the empire shall take place, the Parliament of Ireland may not, as it might naturally think itself entitled to do, proceed to inquire into treaties and alliances?—On a supposed difference of local interest, will the honourable gentleman tell me, it is impossible that the Parliament of Ireland should take one step in giving advice to the Sovereign, and the Parliament of Great Britain another? If, in the present contest, the Opposition were to have as much influence in Ireland as they formerly possessed, a vote for peace might be passed, and the efforts of Great Britain paralyzed. Will the honourable gentleman tell me, that the Parliament of Ireland might not, in such a case, neutralize its ports, prevent the raising of recruits for the army and navy, and strike a fatal blow at the power, and endanger the existence of the empire? Let any man maturely reflect on the dangers that may possibly result from the present situation of both countries, and he will tremble at the perils to which they are exposed. Even with regard to the contest in which we are now struggling for the dearest and most valuable considerations, is there not ground for just alarm? It is true, that the influence of the Opposition party in Ireland has been less predominant than ever. The influence of the great Patriot is extinct in Ireland, nearly in the same way that the reputation of the other great patriots here in England has expired. But if we wish to render the connection perpetual, and to make the ties indissoluble, shall we do our duty to either country if we neglect to bring forward this proposition? I have, Sir, been arguing to provide for the prosperity and safety of Ireland, and to remedy the miserable imperfections of the arrangement made in 1782. But how does it stand at present? The situation of the country is, indeed, deplorable. Rent by party distraction, torn by the division of sects, subject to the revival of inflamed hostility, a prey to the hereditary animosity of the old Irish and English settlers, the scene of constant prejudices proceeding from superstition and ignorance. Add, Sir, to this true colouring, the infusion of the last deadly poison, Jacobinism, and they will altogether produce a picture of the most horrible kind. There we may clearly distinguish a miserable state of ceaseless contention, of perpetual distraction, of the most rooted animosity, which, however great the exertions of the Legislature of Ireland may be, and I heartily give them all the praise which they have received from the tardy panegyric of the honourable gentleman, they can never succeed in removing. These considerations, without entering into any minute details, which, as

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I have before observed, are, in this stage of the business, unnecessary, are, I trust, sufficient to induce the House to agree to the investigation of means that may be deemed adequate to establish the internal tranquillity of that country, add to the store of our common resources, and consolidate and strengthen the general interests of the empire. If any institution be inadequate to provide an effectual remedy for these evils, it is, Sir, I do not hesitate to say, the Irish Legislature; not from any defect of intention, not from any want of talent, but from its own nature; and it is, and must be, incapable of restoring the internal happiness of the country, and fixing the prosperity of the people on a firm and permanent basis, as long as the present state of that kingdom, with respect to its relation to Great Britain, continues. That Legislature, formed as it is, must continue ever radically defective. I have, Sir, spoken an honest and a fair opinion. I have not been deterred from it by any apprehension that it may not prove acceptable to any set of men on this or on the other side of the water; but there is no circumstance of probable difficulty, no idea of the loss of popularity, no personal consideration, however weighty, can prevent me from using every exertion and every effort in my power to accomplish a measure which, in my firm conviction, directly tends to promote the happiness of the people of Ireland, to establish the mutual relations of both countries on the most solid and advantageous basis, and to consolidate, in the most permanent manner, the genuine interests of the British empire.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he should trouble the House for only a few moments, in which he would endeavour to set the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) right with regard to some points upon which he seemed to have entirely misunderstood him. The right honourable gentleman had asserted, that he had given an unqualified opinion that the Parliament of Ireland was not competent to agree to an Union between the two kingdoms, and insinuated that he entertained sentiments on this subject which he had not chosen to express. What right had the right honourable gentleman to say that he spoke not what he thought, or that he had in his heart sentiments which he durst not speak in that House? He thought the right honourable gentleman had known him too long and too well to make an insinuation of this kind; but he did not give that unqualified opinion which was attributed to him. He had merely lamented that he was to be put into a dilemma when he should be obliged to decide upon that delicate question: when the time came, however, that he must give his opinion, he would not shrink from declaring it. With regard to the resolution of the House to which

the right honourable gentleman had referred, he had one observation to make. He must know, that a proposition to consolidate the connection between the two countries upon a basis agreeable to both, could not mean the rescinding the independance of Ireland. Was it to be believed, that his honourable friend (Mr. Fox) had such an object in view? This was a charge which had been often brought forward, but which never was made without being answered. The insinuation that had been thrown out, that his honourable friend had now no authority, was not the most decent: he pretended to no power, but he possessed an influence of which he could not be deprived, the most honourable of all influence, arising from the gratitude and the respect of every independant mind in Great Britain. Could it be thought that his honourable friend, with all that nobleness of nature for which he was distinguished, should entertain a secret purpose contrary to that which he openly avowed? Such conduct might become the crooked policy of some men, but it was totally inconsistent with the candour and rectitude which marked all the actions of the great character to whom this allusion had been made.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that the honourable gentleman had said he ought to have known him too well to imagine that he entertained any opinion he dared not to state to the House. He believed the honourable gentleman had also had opportunities of knowing him, and he did not suppose it would be thought that he would retract any opinion he had intended to convey. He had stated, that if it was argued that the Parliament of Ireland had no right to decide upon the question of an Union; the same incompetence applied to the Parliament of England. This was a consequence which the honourable gentleman did not attempt to deny. In respect to the resolution of the House in the year 1782, and the great Statesman who brought it forward, of whom the honourable gentleman had spoken in a manner rather extraordinary, but which, as proceeding from the warmth of friendship, carried with it its excuse. With regard to that resolution, it had been said it was impossible that great Statesman could bring forward a proposition different from what he really wished to be carried into effect. Upon this he should only observe, that he had had frequent opportunities of discussing that point in the presence of the honourable gentleman alluded to, and on all these occasions he was fully as ill satisfied with the answer he had obtained from him, as he was with that which he had now received. He certainly could not suppose that honourable gentleman intended to take away the independance of Ireland, but from the words of the resolution he had a right to presume that it was not meant to leave the connection between the two countries

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exactly as it was, and that consequently the measures then adopted could not be considered as an arrangement which was never to be altered. It was impossible for him to know what was intended; but though there might be no design of changing the form, or abridging the independence of the Legislature of Ireland, it was evident there was some ulterior measure in contemplation, and therefore the argument so much urged, of a final adjustment having been made must fall to the ground. Having brought the question to this point, he should leave it there, and would not detain the House any farther.

Mr. MARTIN thought, that if upon the future discussion of the subject before the House, it should appear that a Union with Ireland was a measure which would contribute to the advantage of both countries, it ought to be agreed to.

Mr. Sheridan withdrew his amendment, and the original motion was put and carried.

The papers brought down by Mr. Secretary Dundas were ordered to be referred to a Select Committee, which was ordered to be balloted for to-morrow.

Thursday, January 24.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS moved, that the House do proceed to ballot for a Secret Committee to consider of the papers relative to certain supposed conspiracies, &c. delivered yesterday to the House. The House proceeded to ballot accordingly, and the following thirteen names were returned for the Committee :

The right honourable William Pitt,
The right honourable Henry Dundas,
The right honourable Lord Hawkesbury,
Edward Wilbraham Bootle, Esq.

Charles Yorke, Esq.

Isaac Hawkins Browne, Esq.

The right honourable the Master of the Rolls (Sir R. P. Arden),

Mr. Attorney General (Sir John Scott),

Mr. Solicitor General (Sir John Mitford),

The honourable Spencer Percival,

The right honourable Dudley Ryder,

Rowland Burdon, Esq.

The Lord Mayor of London (Sir R. Carr Glyn).

The foregoing Committee to have full power to call for persons, papers, and records, and to sit notwithstanding any adjournment of the House.

The House then adjourned to Thursday the 31st instant.

Thursday, January 31.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS delivered the copy of a letter from his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to his Grace the Duke of Portland, dated 29th November, 1798, including the message sent by his Excellency to both Houses of Parliament, with their addresses in consequence thereof; and also the reports of the Secret Committees of both Houses of Parliament in Ireland. The titles of the papers being read, Mr. Secretary Dundas moved that they should be referred to the Committee of Secrecy appointed on Thursday last, which was ordered.

The order of the day being read for taking His Majesty's message into consideration, the same was read by Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then rose, and spoke as follows:—
Sir, when I proposed to the House, the last time this subject was before them, to fix this day for the farther consideration of His Majesty's message, I certainly indulged the hope that the result of a similar communication to the Parliament of Ireland would have opened a more favourable prospect, than at present exists, of the speedy accomplishment of a measure which I then stated, and which I still consider, to be of the greatest importance to the power, the stability, and the general welfare of the empire; to the immediate interests of both kingdoms; and more particularly to the peace, the tranquillity, and the safety of Ireland: in this hope, I am sorry to say, I have for the present been disappointed, by the proceedings of the Irish House of Commons, of which we have been informed since this subject was last under consideration.

I feel and know that the Parliament of Ireland possesses the power, the intire competence, on the behalf of that country, alike to accept or reject a proposition of this nature—a power which I am by no means inclined to dispute. I see that at the present moment one House of Parliament in Ireland has expressed a repugnance, even to the consideration of this measure. Feeling, Sir, as I have already stated, that it is important, not only as it tends to the general prosperity of the empire of Great Britain, but (what, under every situation, must always be to me an object of the greatest moment) feeling that it was designed and calculated to increase the

prosperity and ensure the safety of Ireland, I must have seen with the deepest regret that, at the very first moment, and before the nature of the measure could be known, it was so received.

But whatever may have been my feelings upon this subject, knowing that it is the undoubted right of the Legislature of Ireland to reject or to adopt such measures as may appear to them injurious or beneficial, far be it from me to speak of its determination in any other terms but those of respect. Let it not, therefore, be imagined that I am inclined to press any sentiment, however calculated it may appear to me to benefit every member of the empire, in any manner which may lead to hostile discussion between two kingdoms, whose mutual happiness and safety depend upon their being strictly and cordially united. But while I admit and respect the rights of the Parliament of Ireland, I feel that, as a Member of the Parliament of Great Britain, I also have a right to exercise, and a duty to perform. That duty is to express, as distinctly as I can, the general nature and outline of the plan, which, in my conscience, I think would tend in the strongest manner to ensure the safety and the happiness of both kingdoms.

While I feel, therefore, that as long as the House of Commons of Ireland view the subject in the light they do at present, there is no chance of its adoption, I do not think that I ought on that account to abstain from submitting it to the consideration of this Parliament; on the contrary, I think it only the more necessary to explain distinctly the principles of the measure, and to state the grounds upon which it appears to me to be entitled to the approbation of the Legislature.

If Parliament, when it is in possession of the basis upon which this plan is founded, and of its general outline, should be of opinion with me, that it is founded upon fair, just, and equitable principles, calculated to produce mutual advantages to the two kingdoms—if Parliament, I say, upon full explanation, and after mature deliberation, should be of that opinion, I should propose that its determination should remain recorded as that by which the Parliament of Great Britain were ready to abide, leaving to the Legislature of Ireland to reject or to adopt it hereafter, upon a full consideration of the subject.

There is no man who will deny that in a great question of this nature, involving in its objects which, in the first instance, are more likely to be decided upon by passion than by judgement; in a question in which an honest, but, I must be allowed to say, a mistaken, sense of national pride is so likely to operate, that much misconception and misconception must inevitably happen. It therefore

becomes the more necessary that the intentions of the Government which proposes the measure, and the principles of the measure itself, should be distinctly understood. But, Sir, in stating that intention and those principles, I look to something more than a mere vindication of Government for having proposed the measure. I do entertain a confidence, even under the apparent discouragement of the opinion expressed by the Irish House of Commons, that this measure is founded upon such clear, such demonstrable grounds of utility, is so calculated to add to the strength and power of the empire, (in which the safety of Ireland is included, and from which it never can be separated) and is attended with so many advantages to Ireland in particular, that all that can be necessary for its ultimate adoption is, that it should be stated distinctly, temperately, and fully, and that it should be left to the unprejudiced, the dispassionate, the sober judgement of the Parliament of Ireland. I wish that those whose interests are involved in this measure should have time for its consideration—I wish that time should be given to the landed, to the mercantile, and manufacturing interest, that they should look at it in all its bearings, and that they should coolly examine and sift the popular arguments by which it has been opposed, and that then they should give their deliberate and final judgement.

I am the more encouraged in this hope of the ultimate success of this measure, when I see, notwithstanding all the prejudices which it has excited, that barely more than one half of the Members that attended the House of Commons were adverse to it; and that in the other House of Parliament in Ireland, containing, as it does, so large a portion of the property of that kingdom, it was approved of by a large majority. When I have reason to believe that the sentiments of a large party of the people of that country are favourable to it; and that much of the manufacturing, and of the commercial interest of Ireland are already sensible how much it is calculated to promote their advantage, I think, when it is more deliberately examined, and when it is seen in what temper it is here proposed and discussed, that it will still terminate in that which can alone be a fortunate result.

It would be vain indeed to hope that a proposition upon which prejudices are so likely to operate, and which is so liable to misconception, should be unanimously approved. But the approbation I hope for is, that of the Parliament of Ireland, and of the intelligent part of the public of that country. It is with a view to this object that I think it my duty to bring this measure forward at present; not for the sake of urging its immediate adoption, but that it may be known and recorded; that the intention of the British Parliament

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may be known, in the hope that it will produce similar sentiments among our countrymen in Ireland. With this view, it is my intention not to go at present into any detailed statement of the plan, because should it ultimately be adopted, the minuter parts must necessarily become the objects of much distinct discussion; but to give such a general statement of the nature of the measure as will enable the House to form a correct judgement upon it.

I shall therefore, Sir, before I sit down, open to the House a string of resolutions, comprising the general heads of this plan. It will be necessary for me, for the purpose of discussing those resolutions with regularity and convenience, to move that the House should resolve itself into a Committee. And I have already stated, that it is not my intention then to press the Committee to come to an immediate decision upon the resolutions; but if, upon full and deliberate examination the resolutions which I shall have the honour to propose, and which contain as much as is necessary for an outline of the plan, shall be approved, my opinion is, that nothing can contribute more to obviate any doubts and dissatisfaction which may exist, than that Parliament should adopt those resolutions, and that it should then humbly lay them at the foot of the Throne, leaving it to His Majesty's wisdom to communicate them to the Parliament of Ireland, whenever circumstances should appear favourable to such a measure. I shall therefore, Sir, proceed as shortly as I can to state to the House the nature of the resolutions, and of the address which I shall propose to accompany them, if it should be the pleasure of the House to adopt them.

Having now, Sir, explained to the House the mode I mean to pursue, and my reasons for persisting, under the present circumstances, in submitting this measure to the consideration of Parliament, I will endeavour to state the general grounds on which it rests, the general arguments by which it is recommended, and to give a short view of the outline of the plan.

As to the general principle upon which the whole of this measure is founded, I am happy to observe, from what passed upon a former occasion, that there is not a probability of any difference of opinion. The general principle, to which both sides of the House perfectly acceded, is, that a perpetual connection between Great Britain and Ireland is essential to the interests of both. The only honourable gentleman, who, when this subject was before the House on a former day, opposed the consideration of the plan altogether, stated, in terms as strong as I could wish, the necessity of preserving the strictest connection between the two countries. I most cordially agree with him in that opinion; but I then stated, that I do not

barely wish for the maintenance of that connection as tending to add to the general strength of the empire, but I wish for the maintenance of it with a peculiar regard to the local interests of Ireland, with a regard to every thing that can give to Ireland its due weight and importance, as a great member of the empire. I wish for it with a view of giving to that country the means of improving all its great natural resources, and of giving it a full participation of all those blessings which this country so eminently enjoys.

Considering the subject in this point of view, and assuming it as a proposition not to be controverted, that it is the duty of those who wish to promote the interest and prosperity of both countries, to maintain the strongest connection between them, let me ask, what is the situation of affairs that has called us to the discussion of this subject? This very connection, the necessity of which has been admitted on all hands, has been attacked by foreign enemies, and by domestic traitors. The dissolution of this connection is the great object of the hostility of the common enemies of both countries; it is almost the only remaining hope with which they now continue the contest. Baffled and defeated as they have hitherto been, they still retain the hope, they are still meditating attempts, to dissolve that connection. In how many instances already the defeat of their hostile designs has been turned to the confirmation of our strength and security, I need not enumerate. God grant that in this instance the same favour of Divine Providence, which has in so many instances protected this empire, may again interpose in our favour, and that the attempts of the enemy to separate the two countries, may tend ultimately to knit them more closely together, to strengthen a connection, the best pledge for the happiness of both, and so add to that power which forms the chief barrier to the civilized world, against the destructive principles, the dangerous projects, and the unexampled usurpation of France. This connection has been attacked not only by the avowed enemies of both countries, but by internal treason, acting in concert with the designs of the enemy. Internal treason, which ingrafted Jacobinism on those diseases which necessarily grew out of the state and condition of Ireland.

Thinking, then, as we all must think, that a close connection with Ireland is essential to the interests of both countries, and seeing how much this connection is attacked, let it not be insinuated that it is unnecessary, much less improper, at this arduous and important crisis, to see whether some new arrangements, some fundamental regulations, are not necessary, to guard against the threatened danger. The foreign and domestic enemies of these kingdoms have shewn,

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that they think this the vulnerable point in which we may be most successfully attacked ; let us derive advantage, if we can, from the hostility of our enemies—let us profit by the designs of those who, if their conduct displays no true wisdom, at least possess in an eminent degree that species of wisdom which is calculated for the promotion of mischief. They know upon what footing that connection rests at this moment between the two countries, and they feel the most ardent hope, that the two Parliaments will be infatuated enough not to render their designs abortive, by fixing that connection upon a more solid basis.

These circumstances I am sure will not be denied. And if upon other grounds we had any doubt, these circumstances alone ought to induce us, deliberately and dispassionately, to review the situation of the two countries, and to endeavour to find out a proper remedy for an evil, the existence of which is but too apparent. It requires but a moment's reflection, for any man who has marked the progress of events, to decide upon the true state and character of this connection. It is evidently one which does not afford that security which, even in times less dangerous and less critical than the present, would have been necessary, to enable the empire to avail itself of its strength and its resources.

When I last addressed the House on this subject, I stated that the settlement, which was made in 1782, so far from deserving the name of a final adjustment, was one that left the connection between Great Britain and Ireland exposed to all the attacks of party, and all the effects of accident. That settlement consisted in the demolition of the system which before held the two countries together. Let me not be understood as expressing any regret at the termination of that system. I disapproved of it, because I thought it was one unworthy the liberality of Great Britain, and injurious to the interests of Ireland. But to call that a system in itself—to call that a glorious fabric of human wisdom—which is no more than the mere demolition of another system—is a perversion of terms which, however prevalent of late, can only be the effect of gross misconception, or of great hypocrisy.

We boast that we have done every thing, when we have merely destroyed all that before existed, without substituting any thing in its place. Such was the *final adjustment* of 1782 ; and I can prove it to be so, not only from the plainest reasoning, but I can prove it by the opinion expressed by the British Parliament at that very time. I can prove it by the opinion expressed by those very Ministers by whom it was proposed and conducted. I can prove it by the opinion of that very Government who boast of having

effected a final adjustment. I refer, for what I have said, to proofs which they will find it very difficult to answer—I mean their own acts, which will plainly shew that they were of opinion that a new system would be necessary.

But, Sir, I will go farther—I will also produce the authority of one of those whose influence, on the present occasion, has been peculiarly exerted to prevent the discussion of the question in Ireland—of one, of whom I do not wish to speak but with respect, but for whom, nevertheless, I should convey an idea of more respect than I can now feel to be due to him, if I were merely to describe him as the person who fills the same situation, in the House of Commons of Ireland, which you, Sir, hold among us, and of which, on all occasions, *you* discharge the duties with a dignity and impartiality which reflects so much credit on yourself, and so well supports the character and authority of the House.

On a former night, I read an extract from the Journals, to shew what was the opinion even of those by whom the final adjustment was proposed on that measure. It would there appear, that the message was sent to the Parliament of Ireland, recommending to them the adoption of some plan for a final adjustment between the two countries, and wishing to know what were the grounds of the grievances of which they complained. In answer to this message, the Parliament of Ireland stated certain grievances, the principal of which was, the power claimed by the Parliament of Great Britain of making laws to bind Ireland; but, with respect to that part of the message which related to the propriety of adopting some measures for a final adjustment between the two countries, they were wholly silent. This address was laid before the Parliament of Great Britain, to whom a similar message had been previously sent, and on that ground was moved the repeal of what was called the Declaratory Act; which motion was assented to by the British Parliament. This satisfaction was complete in Ireland, as far as related to the grievance of which her Parliament had complained, viz. the power of the British Parliament of making laws for Ireland, because, by the repeal of the Declaratory Act, that power was given up. But so far was the Minister of that day from considering that the repeal of that law finally terminated all differences, and established the connection between the two countries upon a solid basis, that he thought it necessary to move that a farther settlement was indispensable for the maintenance of that connection.

[Mr. Sheridan across the table, desired that that part of the Journals to which Mr. Pitt alluded, might be read.]

Mr. Chancellor Pitt continued. Sir, I have stated the substance

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of the Journals correctly ; they were read on a former night, and the honourable gentleman may, if he chuses, have them read again ; if he does, he will find that they fully justify the statement I have made ; but I beg that at present I may not be interrupted. I do maintain, that, upon a reference to the Journals of the period to which I have alluded, it will appear that a farther agreement between Great Britain and Ireland is there stated, in the opinion of the Administration of the day, to be absolutely necessary.

I beg farther to state, that after the motion for the bill, of which so much has been said, was passed, an address to His Majesty was moved and carried, praying him to take such farther measures as to him seemed proper, to strengthen the connection between the two countries. His Majesty's most gracious answer, stating, that in compliance with the address, he would immediately take such measures as might be necessary for that purpose, was delivered to the House by an honourable gentleman who then filled the office of Secretary of State, and whom we have not lately seen in the House, though he still continues to be a Member of it. I do assert, without the least fear of contradiction from any gentleman whatever, that it was in the contemplation of the Government of that day, to adopt some measures of the nature alluded to in the address ; since that period, however, no such measure has been taken. I do also maintain, that that very system which by these very Ministers who brought it forward was found to be imperfect, even for the purpose of maintaining the connection between the two countries, remains at this moment in the same imperfect state. It leaves the two countries with separate and independent Legislatures, connected only with this tie, that the Third Estate in both countries is the same—that the Executive Government is the same—that the Crown exercises its power of assenting to Irish acts of Parliament, under the Great Seal of Great Britain, and by the advice of British Ministers.

This is the only principle of connection which is left by the final adjustment of 1782. Whether this is a sufficient tie to unite them in time of peace ; whether in time of war it is sufficient to consolidate their strength against a common enemy ? whether it is sufficient to guard against those local jealousies which must necessarily sometimes exist between countries so connected ; whether it is calculated to give to Ireland all the important commercial and political advantages which she would derive from a closer connection with Great Britain ; whether it can give to both nations that degree of strength and prosperity which must be the result of such a measure as the present, I believe needs only to be stated to be decided.

But I have already said, that I have, upon this point, the authority of an opinion to which I before alluded—an opinion delivered upon a very important measure, very soon after the final adjustment of 1782. The measure to which I refer, was that of the commercial propositions which were brought forward in 1785. I am not now going to enter into a discussion of the merits of that measure. The best, perhaps, that can be said of it is, that it went as far as circumstances would then permit, to draw the two countries to a closer connection. But those who think that the adjustment of 1782 was final, and that it contained all that was necessary for the establishment of the connection between the two countries upon a firm basis, can hardly contend that the commercial propositions of 1785 were necessary to prevent the danger of separation between the two countries, and to prevent the conflicting operation of independent Legislatures. Yet, if I am not mistaken, there will be found, upon a reference to better records than those in which Parliamentary Debates are usually stated (I mean a statement of what passed in the discussion upon those propositions fourteen years ago, made, as I have understood, by some of the principal parties themselves), that the Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day in Ireland, in a debate upon the Irish propositions, held this language—"If this infatuated country gives up the present offer, she may look for it again in vain." Here the right honourable gentleman was happily mistaken; Ireland has again had the offer of the same advantages, but more complete, and in all respects better calculated to attain their object; and this offer the right honourable gentleman has exerted all his influence to reject. But he goes on to say—"THINGS CANNOT REMAIN AS THEY ARE—" Commercial jealousy is roused—it will increase with *two independent Legislatures*—and without an united interest in commerce, in a commercial empire, political Union will receive many shocks, and *separation of interest* must threaten *separation of connection*, which every *honest Irishman* must shudder to look at, as a possible event."

Gentlemen will have the goodness to observe, that I am not now quoting these expressions as pledges given by that right honourable gentleman that he would support a proposal for a Union between the two countries; but I am adducing them to prove, that the situation of the two countries after the final adjustment of 1782, was such, in his opinion, as led to the danger of a separation between them. I am not now arguing, that a legislative Union is the only measure which can possibly be adopted; but I am contending, that the adjustment of 1782 was never considered as final, by

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those who now state it to be so as an argument against the consideration of the present measure. How the honourable gentleman on the other side of the House will evade this authority I do not know—an authority too, which, I must observe, he seems much more inclined to treat with respect than he was formerly.

But, Sir, it does not stop there. What is the evil to which he alludes? Commercial jealousies between two countries acting upon the laws of two independent Legislatures, and from the danger of those Legislatures acting in opposition to each other. How can this evil be remedied? By two means only; either by some compact entered into by the Legislatures of the two countries respecting the mode of forming their commercial regulations, or else by blending the two Legislatures together; these are the only two means. I defy the wit of man to point out a third. The mode of compact was proposed in 1785; but unfortunately, in spite of that right honourable gentleman's eloquence and authority, who then stated the importance of guarding against the evil, it so happened that doctrines, derived chiefly from this side of the water, succeeded in convincing the Parliament of Ireland, that it would be inconsistent with their independence, to enter into any compact whatever. We have then the authority of that right honourable gentleman to whom I have so often alluded, that the unsettled state in which the matter was left, would give "Political Union many shocks, and lead to a separation of connection." The experiment of a mutual compact has been tried without success; the arrangement of that sort, which was proposed in 1785, in order to obviate the inconveniences stated by the right honourable gentleman, was then attacked with the same success against his authority, as another and more effectual remedy has recently experienced under his auspices. The result then is—you must remain in the state which that right honourable gentleman has described, with the seeds of separation in the system now established, and with the connection, on which the mutual prosperity of both countries depends, in danger of being hourly dissolved, or you must again recur to the proposal of a compact similar to that rejected in 1785, or you must resort to the best and most effectual remedy—a *Legislative Union*.

I have dwelt longer, perhaps, upon this part of the subject than was absolutely necessary, because I believe there is scarcely any man who has ever asked himself, whether there is a solid, permanent system of connection between the two countries, who could, upon reflection, answer the question in the affirmative. But besides the authorities of the persons who made the arrangement in 1782, and of those who have since treated of it, to shew that it was not

deemed to be final and complete ; I have farther the test of experience to shew how imperfect it was, and how inadequate in practice to the great object of cementing the connection, and placing it beyond the danger of being dissolved. In the single instance which has occurred, (and that a melancholy one which all of us deplored,) in which we could feel the effects of two jarring Legislatures, we did feel it. On that occasion, it might have produced the most signal calamities, had we not been rescued from its danger by an event, to which no man can now look back without feeling the utmost joy and exultation ; feelings, which subsequent circumstances have served to heighten and confirm. Every gentleman will know, that I must allude to the Regency. With two independent Legislatures, acting upon different principles, it was accident alone that preserved the identity of the Executive Power, which is the bond and security of the connection : and even then the Executive Authority, though vested in one person, would have been held by two different tenures, by one tenure in England, by another in Ireland, had not the interposition of Providence prevented a circumstance pregnant with the most imminent perils, and which might have operated to a separation of the two kingdoms.

After seeing the recorded opinion of Parliament, of those who made the arrangement of 1782, and after the decided testimony of experience on the subject, within the short period of sixteen years, perhaps, it is hardly necessary to appeal to farther proofs of its inadequacy, or to desire gentlemen to look forward to possible cases, which I could easily put, and which will naturally suggest themselves to the minds of all, who chuse to turn their attention to the subject.

But when we consider the distinct powers possessed by the two Legislatures on all the great questions of peace and war, of alliances and confederacies—(for they each have in principle, a right to discuss them and decide upon them, though one of them has hitherto been wisely restrained by discretion, from the exercise of that right)—have we not seen circumstances to induce us to think it possible, at least, that on some of these important questions the opinions and decisions of the two Parliaments might have been at variance ? Are we talking of an indissoluble connection, when we see it thus perpetually liable to be endangered ? Can we really think that the interests of the empire, or of its different branches, rest upon a safe and solid basis at present ? I am anxious to discuss this point closely with any man, either here, or in Ireland. Will it be said, that the Parliament of the latter country is bound by our decision on the question of peace or war ? And if not so bound, will any man,

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looking at human nature as it is, contend, that there is a sufficient certainty that the decision on that important subject will always be the same in both countries? I should be glad to receive a distinct answer to this question, from the honourable gentleman who has declared himself to be as warm a friend to the connection between the two countries as I am.

Suppose, for instance, that the present war, which the Parliament of Great Britain considers to be just and necessary, had been voted by the Irish Parliament, to be unjust, unnecessary, extravagant, and hostile to the principles of humanity and freedom. Would that Parliament have been bound by this country? If not;—what security have we, at a moment the most important to our common interest and common salvation, that the two kingdoms should have but one friend and one foe? I repeat it; I am eager to hear what can be said in justification of a basis so imperfect and unsound, and liable to be shaken by so many accidents. I have already observed that in the peculiar circumstances of the present moment, we may find stronger reasons to prove the necessity of correcting the system of connection between this country and Ireland, of supplying its imperfections, and strengthening its weakness, than are to be found at any former period.

Having thus stated, Sir, and I think sufficiently proved, that the settlement of 1782, in every point of view in which it can be considered, is imperfect, and inadequate to the object of maintaining the connection between the two kingdoms, I proceed next to the circumstances which peculiarly call upon us at the present moment to remedy that imperfection.

This country is at this time engaged in the most important, and momentous conflict that ever occurred in the history of the world; a conflict in which Great Britain is distinguished for having made the only manly and successful stand against the common enemies of civilized society. We see the point in which that enemy thinks us the most assailable—Are we not then bound in policy and prudence, to strengthen that vulnerable point, involved as we are in a contest of Liberty against Despotism—of Property against Plunder and Rapine—of Religion and Order against Impiety and Anarchy? There was a time when this would have been termed declamation; but, unfortunately, long and bitter experience has taught us to feel that it is only the feeble and imperfect representation of those calamities (the result of French principles and French arms), which are attested by the wounds of a bleeding world.

Is there a man who does not admit the importance of a measure which, at such a crisis, may augment the strength of the empire, and

thereby ensure its safety? Would not that benefit to Ireland be of itself so solid, so inestimable, that, in comparison with it, all commercial interests, and the preservation of local habits and manners, would be trifling, even if they were endangered by the present measure; which they undoubtedly are not? The people of Ireland are proud, I believe, of being associated with us in the great contest in which we are engaged, and must feel the advantage of augmenting the general force of the empire. That the present measure is calculated to produce that effect, is a proposition which I think cannot be disputed. There is not in any Court of Europe a Statesman so ill informed as not to know, that the general power of the empire would be increased to a very great extent indeed, by such a consolidation of the strength of the two kingdoms. In the course of the century every writer of any information on the subject has held the same language, and in the general strength of the empire both kingdoms are more concerned than in any particular interests which may belong to either. If we were to ask the Ministers of our allies, what measure they thought the most likely to augment the power of the British empire, and consequently increase that strength by which they were now protected—if we were to ask the agent of our enemies, what measure would be the most likely to render their designs abortive—the answer would be the same in both cases, viz. the firm consolidation of every part of the empire.

There is another consideration well worth attention. Recollect what are the peculiar means by which we have been enabled to resist the unequalled and eccentric efforts of France, without any diminution, nay, with an increase, of our general prosperity—what, but the great commercial resources which we possess? A measure, then, which must communicate to such a mighty limb of the empire as Ireland, all the commercial advantages which Great Britain possesses, which will open the markets of the one country to the other, which will give them both the common use of their capital, must, by diffusing a large portion of wealth into Ireland, considerably increase the resources, and consequently the strength, of the whole empire.

But it is not merely in this general view, that I think the question ought to be considered. We ought to look to it with a view peculiarly to the permanent interest and security of Ireland. When that country was threatened with the double danger of hostile attacks by enemies without, and of treason within, from what quarter did she derive the means of her deliverance?—from the naval force of Great Britain—from the voluntary exertions of her military of every description, not called for by law—and from her pe-

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cuniary resources, added to the loyalty and energy of the inhabitants of Ireland itself; of which it is impossible to speak with too much praise, and which shews how well they deserve to be called the brethren of Britons. Their own courage-might, perhaps, have ultimately succeeded, in repelling the dangers by which they were threatened, but it would have been after a long contest, and after having waded through seas of blood. Are we sure that the same ready and effectual assistance which we have happily afforded, on the present occasion, will be always equally within our power? Great Britain has always felt a common interest in the safety of Ireland; but that common interest was never so obvious and urgent as when the common enemy made her attack upon Great Britain, through the medium of Ireland, and when their attack upon Ireland went to deprive her of her connection with Great Britain, and to substitute in its stead, the new Government of the French Republic. When that danger threatened Ireland, the purse of Great Britain was as open for the wants of Ireland, as for the necessities of England.

I do not, Sir, state these circumstances, as upbraiding Ireland for the benefits we have conferred; far from it; but I state them with pleasure, as shewing the friendship and good will with which this country has acted towards her. But if struggles of this sort may and must return again, if the worst dangers are those which are yet to come, dangers which may be greater from being more disguised—if those situations may arise when the same means of relief are not in our power, what is the remedy that reason and policy point out? It is to identify them with us—it is to make them part of the same community, by giving them a full share of those accumulated blessings which are diffused throughout Great Britain; it is, in a word, by giving them a full participation of the wealth, the power, and the glory of the British empire. If then this measure comes recommended not only by the obvious defects of the system which now exists, but that it has also the pre-eminent recommendation of increasing the general power of the empire, and of guarding against future danger from the common enemy, we are next to consider it as to its effects upon the internal condition of Ireland.

I know perfectly well, that as long as Ireland is separated from Great Britain, any attempt on our part to provide measures which we might think salutary, as respecting questions of contending sects or parties, of the claimed rights of the Catholics, or of the precautions necessary for the security of the Protestants—I know that all these, though they may have been brought forward by the very per-

sons who are the advocates of the final adjustment in 1782, were, in fact, attacks upon the independence of the Irish Parliament, and attempts to usurp the right of deciding on points which can only be brought within our province by compact. Until the kingdoms are united, any attempt to make regulations here for the internal state of Ireland must certainly be a violation of her independence. But feeling as I do, for their interests and their welfare, I cannot be inattentive to the events that are passing before me; I must therefore repeat, that whoever looks at the circumstances to which I have alluded—whoever considers that the enemy have shewn by their conduct, that they considered Ireland as the weakest and most vulnerable part of the empire; whoever reflects upon those dreadful and inexcusable cruelties instigated by the enemies of both countries, and upon those lamentable severities by which the exertions for the defence of Ireland were unhappily, but unavoidably, attended, and the necessity of which is itself one great aggravation of the crimes and treasons which led to them, must feel that, as it now stands composed, in the hostile division of its sects, in the animosities existing between ancient settlers and original inhabitants, in the ignorance and want of civilization, which marks that country more than almost any other country in Europe, in the unfortunate prevalence of Jacobin principles, arising from these causes, and augmenting their malignity, and which have produced that distressed state which we now deplore; every one, I say, who reflects upon all these circumstances, must agree with me in thinking, that there is no cure but in the formation of a General Imperial Legislature, free alike from terror and from resentment, removed from the danger and agitation, and uninfluenced by the prejudices, and uninflamed by the passions of that distracted country.

I know that it is impossible, if we wish to consider this subject properly, to consider it in any other point of view than as it affects the empire in general. I know that the interests of the two countries must be taken together, and that a man cannot speak as a true Englishman, unless he speaks as a true Irishman, nor as a true Irishman, unless he speaks as a true Englishman: but if it were possible to separate them, and I could consider myself as addressing you, not as interested for the empire at large, but for Ireland alone, I should say, that it would be indispensably necessary, for the sake of that country, to compose its present distractions, by the adoption of another system—I should say, that the establishment of an Imperial Legislature was the only means of healing its wounds, and of restoring it to tranquillity. I must here take the liberty of alluding

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to some topics which were touched upon during the discussion of the former night.

Among the great and known defects of Ireland, one of the most prominent features is, its want of industry and a capital; how are those wants to be supplied, but by blending more closely with Ireland, the industry and the capital of this country. But, above all, in the great leading distinction between the people of Ireland, (I mean their religious distinctions,) what is their situation?—The Protestant feels that the claims of the Catholics threaten the existence of the Protestant ascendancy; while, on the other hand, the great body of Catholics feel the establishment of the National Church, and their exclusion from the exercise of certain rights and privileges, a grievance. Between the two, it becomes a matter of difficulty in the minds of many persons, whether it would be better to listen only to the fears of the former, or to grant the claims of the latter.

I am well aware that the subject of religious distinction is a dangerous and delicate topic, especially when applied to a country such as Ireland; the situation of which is different in this respect from that of every other. Where the established religion of the State is the same as the general religion of the empire, and where the property of the country is in the hands of a comparatively small number of persons professing that established religion, while the religion of a great majority of the people is different, it is not easy to say, on general principles, what system of Church Establishment in such a country would be free from difficulty and inconvenience. By many I know it will be contended, that the religion professed by the majority of the people, would, at least, be entitled to an equality of privileges. I have heard such an argument urged in this House; but those who apply it without qualification to the case of Ireland, forget surely the principles on which English interest and English connection has been established in that country, and on which its present Legislature is formed. No man can say, that, in the present state of things, and while Ireland remains a separate kingdom, full concessions could be made to the Catholics, without endangering the State, and shaking the Constitution of Ireland to its centre.

On the other hand, without anticipating the discussion, or the propriety of agitating the question, or saying how soon or how late it may be fit to discuss it; two propositions are indisputable: First, When the conduct of the Catholics shall be such as to make it safe for the Government to admit them to the participation of the privileges granted to those of the established religion, and when the

temper of the times shall be favourable to such a measure—When these events take place, it is obvious that such a question may be agitated in an United, Imperial Parliament, with much greater safety, than it could be in a separate Legislature. In the second place, I think it certain that, even for whatever period it may be thought necessary, after the Union, to withhold from the Catholics the enjoyment of those advantages, many of the objections which at present arise out of their situation would be removed, if the Protestant Legislature were no longer separate and local, but general and imperial; and the Catholics themselves would at once feel a mitigation of the most goading and irritating of their present causes of complaint.

How far, in addition to this great and leading consideration, it may also be wise and practicable to accompany the measure by some mode of relieving the lower orders from the pressure of tithes, which, in many instances, operate at present as a great practical evil, or to make, under proper regulations, and without breaking in on the security of the present Protestant establishment, an effectual and adequate provision for the Catholic Clergy, it is not now necessary to discuss. It is sufficient to say, that these and all other subordinate points connected with the same subject, are more likely to be permanently and satisfactorily settled by an United Legislature, than by any local arrangements. On these grounds I contend, that with a view to providing an effectual remedy for the distractions which have unhappily prevailed in Ireland, with a view of removing those causes which have endangered, and still endanger its security, the measure which I am now proposing promises to be more effectual than any other which can be devised; and on these grounds alone, if there existed no other, I should feel it my duty to submit it to the House.

But, Sir, though what I have thus stated relates most immediately to the great object of healing the dissensions, and providing for the internal tranquillity of Ireland; there are also other objects which, though comparatively with this of inferior importance, are yet in themselves highly material, and in a secondary view, well worthy of attention.

I have heard it asked, when I pressed the measure, what are the positive advantages that Ireland is to derive from it? To this very question I presume the considerations which I have already urged afford a sufficient answer. But, in fact, the question itself is to be considered in another view; and it will be found to bear some resemblance to a question which has been repeatedly put, by some of the gentlemen opposite to me, during the last six years. What are

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the advantages which Great Britain has gained by the present war with France ?

To this, the brilliant successes of the British arms by sea and land, our unexampled naval victories over all our enemies, the solid acquisition of valuable territory, the general increase of our power, the progressive extension of our commerce, and a series of events more glorious than any that ever adorned the page of our history, afford at once an ample and a satisfactory answer. But there is another general answer which we have uniformly given, and which would alone be sufficient : it is, that we did not enter into this war for any purpose of ambition ; our object was not to acquire, but to preserve ; and in this sense, what we have gained by the war is, in one word, ALL that we should have lost without it : it is, the preservation of our constitution, our independence, our honour, our existence as a nation.

In the same manner I might answer the question with respect to Ireland ; I might enumerate the general advantages which Ireland would derive from the effects of the arrangement to which I have already referred—the protection which she will secure to herself in the hour of danger. The most effectual means of increasing her commerce and improving her agriculture, the command of English capital, the infusion of English manners and English industry, necessarily tending to ameliorate her condition, to accelerate the progress of internal civilization, and to terminate those feuds and dissensions which now distract the country, and which she does not possess, within herself, the power either to control or to extinguish. She would see the avenue to honours, to distinctions, and exalted situations in the general seat of empire, opened to all those whose abilities and talents enable them to indulge an honourable and laudable ambition.

But, independent of all these advantages, I might also answer, that the question is not what Ireland is to gain, but what she is to preserve : not merely how she may best improve her situation, but how she is to avert a pressing and immediate danger. In this view, what she gains is the preservation of all those blessings arising from the British Constitution, and which are inseparable from her connection with Great Britain. Those blessings, of which it has long been the aim of France, in conjunction with domestic traitors, to deprive her, and on their ruins to establish (with all its attendant miseries and horrors) a Jacobin Republic, founded on French influence, and existing only in subserviency to France.

Such, Sir, would be the answer, if we direct our attention only to

the question of general advantage. And here I should be inclined to stop; but since it has also been more particularly asked, what are the advantages which she is to gain, in point of commerce and manufactures, I am desirous of applying my answer more immediately and distinctly to that part of the subject: and, as I know that the statement will carry more conviction with it, to those who make the inquiry, if given in the words of the right honourable gentleman, to whom, and to whose opinions, I have had more than one occasion to advert in the course of this night, I will read you an extract from his recorded sentiments on the subject, in the year 1785, on this same memorable occasion of the commercial propositions. Speaking of a solid and unalterable compact between the two countries, speaking expressly of the peculiar importance of insuring the continuance of those commercial benefits, which she at that time held only at the discretion of this country, he says—"The exportation of Irish products, to England, amounts to two millions and a half annually; and the exportation of British products, to Ireland, amounts to but one million."

He then proceeds to reason upon the advantage which Ireland would derive, under such circumstances, from guarding against mutual prohibitions; and he accompanies the statement, which I have just read, with this observation—

"If, indeed, the adjustment were to take away the benefit from Ireland; it would be a good cause for rejecting it; but, as it for ever confirms all the advantages we derived from our linen trade, and binds England from making any law that can be injurious to it, surely gentlemen who regard that trade, and whose fortunes and rents depend on its prosperity, will not entertain a moment's doubt about embracing the offer."

Such was the reasoning of the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, which I consider to have been perfectly just. With reference to his late opinions, I do not think I can more forcibly reply, to a person who signs his name to propositions which declare, that the ruin of the linen trade of Ireland is likely to be the consequence of an Union, than by opposing to him his own opinion. I shall be able to strengthen the former opinion of that gentleman, by stating, that the progress that has been made in commercial advantages to Ireland since 1785, has been such as to render his argument still more applicable. What is the nature of that commerce, explained by the same person in so concise and forcible a manner, that I am happy to use his own statement? He does not confine himself to the gross amount, but give the articles in detail—

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" Britain," he says, " imports annually from us two million
" five hundred thousand pounds of our products, all, or very nearly
" all, duty free, and covenants never to lay a duty on them. We
" import about a million of her's, and raise a revenue on almost
" every article of it, and reserve the power of continuing that re-
" venue. She exports to us salt for our fisheries and provisions ;
" hops, which we cannot grow ; coals, which we cannot raise ; tin,
" which we have not ; and bark, which we cannot get elsewhere :
" and all these without reserving any duty."

I will not tire the patience of the House by reading farther extracts ; but the right honourable gentleman's whole speech, in like manner, points out the advantages of the commercial propositions (at that time under consideration) as a ground-work of a compact between the two countries, in 1785, on commercial subjects. But how stands the case now ? The trade is at this time infinitely more advantageous to Ireland. It will be proved, from the documents which I hold in my hand, as far as relates to the mere interchange of manufactures, that the manufactures, exported to Ireland from Great Britain, in 1797, very little exceeded a million sterling (the articles of produce amount to nearly the same sum) while Great Britain, on the other hand, imported from Ireland to the amount of near three millions in the manufactured articles of linen and linen yarn, and between two and three millions in provisions and cattle, besides corn and other articles of produce.

In addition to these articles, there are other circumstances of advantage to Ireland. Articles which are essential to her trade and to her subsistence, or serve as raw materials for her manufactures, are sent from hence free of duty. It is expressly stated on the same authority, that all that we take back from Ireland was liable to a duty in that country on their exports : the increasing produce of the chief article of their manufacture, and four-fifths of her whole export trade, are to be ascribed, not to that *Independent Legislature*, but to the liberality of the British Parliament. It is by the free admission of linens for our market, and the bounties granted by the British Parliament on its re export, that the linen trade has been brought to the height at which we now see it. To the Parliament of this country, then, it is now owing, that a market has been opened for her linen to the amount of three millions. By the bounty we give to Ireland, we afford her a double market for that article, and (what is still more striking and important) we have prevented a competition against her, arising from the superior cheapness of the linen manufactures of the Continent, by subjecting their importation to a duty of thirty per cent. Nothing would more clearly shew

what would be the danger to Ireland from the competition in all its principal branches of the linen trade, than the simple fact, that we even now import foreign linens, under this heavy duty, to an amount equal to a seventh part of all that Ireland is able to send us, with the preference that has been stated. By this arrangement alone, we must therefore be considered, either as foregoing between seven and eight hundred thousand pounds per annum in revenue, which we should collect if we chose to levy the same duty on all linens, Irish as well as foreign, or on the other hand, as sacrificing, perhaps, at least, a million sterling in the price paid for those articles, by the subjects of this country, which might be saved, if we allowed the importation of all linen, foreign as well as Irish, equally free from duty.

The present measure is, however, in its effects, calculated not merely for a confirmation of the advantages on which the person to whom I have alluded has insisted. It is obvious that a fuller and more perfect connection of the two countries, from whatever cause it may arise, must produce a greater facility and freedom of commercial intercourse, and ultimately tend to the advantage of both. The benefits to be derived to either country from such an arrangement must indeed, in a great measure, be gradual; but they are not on that account the less certain, and they cannot be stated in more forcible language than in that used in the speech to which I have referred—

“Gentlemen undervalue the reduction of British duties on our manufactures. I agree with them it may not operate soon, but we are to look forward to a final settlement, and it is impossible but that in time, with as good climate, equal natural powers, cheaper food, and fewer taxes, we must be able to sell to them. When commercial jealousy shall be banished by final settlement, and trade take its natural and steady course, the kingdoms will cease to look to rivalry, each will make that fabric which it can do cheapest, and buy from the other what it cannot make so advantageously. Labour will be then truly employed to profit, not diverted by bounties, jealousies, or legislative interference, from its natural and beneficial course. This system will attain its real object, consolidating the strength of the remaining parts of the empire, by encouraging the communications of their market among themselves, with preference to every part against all strangers!”

I am, at least, therefore, secure from the design of appearing to deliver any partial or commercial opinion of my own, when I thus state, on the authority of a person the best informed, and who then

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judged dispassionately, both the infinite importance to Ireland of securing permanently the great commercial advantages which she now holds at the discretion of Great Britain, and the additional benefit which she would derive from any settlement which opened to her gradually a still more free and complete commercial intercourse with this country. And while I state thus strongly the commercial advantages to the sister kingdom, I have no alarm lest I should excite any sentiment of jealousy here. I know that the inhabitants of Great Britain wish well to the prosperity of Ireland; that, if the kingdoms are really and solidly united, they feel that to increase the commercial wealth of one country is not to diminish that of the other, but to increase the strength and power of both. But to justify that sentiment, we must be satisfied that the wealth we are pouring into the lap of Ireland is not every day liable to be snatched from us, and thrown into the scale of the enemy. If, therefore, Ireland is to continue, as I trust it will for ever, an essential part of the integral strength of the British empire; if her strength is to be permanently ours, and our strength to be hers, neither I, nor any English Minister, can ever be deterred, by the fear of creating jealousy in the hearts of Englishmen, from stating the advantages of a closer connection, or from giving any assistance to the commercial prosperity of that kingdom.

If ever, indeed, I should have the misfortune to witness the melancholy moment when such principles must be abandoned, when all hope of seeing Ireland permanently and securely connected with this country shall be at an end, I shall, at least, have the consolation of knowing, that it will not be the want of temper or forbearance, of conciliation, of kindness, or of full explanation on our part, which will have produced an event so fatal to Ireland, and so dangerous to Great Britain. If ever the over-bearing power of prejudice and passion shall produce that fatal consequence, it will too late be perceived and acknowledged, that all the great commercial advantages which Ireland at present enjoys, and which are continually increasing, are to be ascribed to the liberal conduct, the fostering care, of the British empire, extended to the sister kingdom as to a part of ourselves, and not (as has been fallaciously and vainly pretended) to any thing which has been done or can be done by the independent power of her own separate Legislature.

I have thus, Sir, endeavoured to state to you the reasons, why I think this measure advisable; why I wish it to be proposed to the Parliament of Ireland, with temper and fairness; and why it appears to me entitled, at least, to a calm and dispassionate discussion in that kingdom. I am aware, however, that objections have been

urged against the measure, some of which are undoubtedly plausible, and have been but too successful in their influence on the Irish Parliament. Of these objections I shall now proceed, as concisely as possible, to take some notice.

The first is, what I heard alluded to by the honourable gentleman opposite to me, when His Majesty's message was brought down; namely—That the Parliament of Ireland is incompetent to entertain and discuss the question, or rather, to act upon the measure proposed, without having previously obtained the consent of the people of Ireland, their constituents. But, Sir, I am led to suppose from what the honourable gentleman afterwards stated, that he made this objection, rather by way of deprecating the discussion of the question, than as entertaining the smallest doubt upon it himself. If, however, the honourable gentleman, or any other gentleman on the other side of the House, should seriously entertain a doubt on the subject, I shall be ready to discuss it with him distinctly, either this night or at any future opportunity. For the present I will assume, that no man can deny the competency of the Parliament of Ireland (representing as it does, in the language of our Constitution, "*lawfully, fully, and freely, all the estates of the people of the realm,*") to make laws to bind that people, unless he is disposed to distinguish that Parliament from the Parliament of Great Britain; and, while he maintains the independence of the Irish Legislature, yet denies to it the lawful and essential powers of Parliament. No man, who maintains the Parliament of Ireland to be co-equal with our own, can deny its competency on this question, unless he means to go the length of denying, at the same moment, the whole of the authority of the Parliament of Great Britain—to shake every principle of legislation—and to maintain, that all the acts passed, and every thing done by Parliament, or sanctioned by its authority, however sacred, however beneficial, is neither more nor less than an act of usurpation. He must not only deny the validity of the Union between Scotland and England, but he must deny the authority of every one of the proceedings of the limited Legislature since the Union; nay, Sir, he must go still farther, and deny the authority under which we now sit and deliberate here, as a House of Parliament. Of course, he must deny the validity of the adjustment of 1782, and call in question every measure which he has himself been the most forward to have enforced. This point, Sir, is of so much importance, that I think I ought not to suffer the opportunity to pass, without illustrating more fully what I mean. If this principle of the incompetency of Parliament to the decision of the measure be admitted, or if it be contended, that Parliament has no legitimate

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authority to discuss and decide upon it, you will be driven to the necessity of recognizing a principle, the most dangerous that ever was adopted in any civilized state. I mean the principle, that Parliament cannot adopt any measure new in its nature, and of great importance, without appealing to the constituent and delegating authority for directions. If that doctrine be true, look to what an extent it will carry you. If such an argument could be set up and maintained, you acted without any legitimate authority when you created the representation of the principality of Wales, or of either of the counties Palatine of England. Every law that Parliament ever made, without that appeal, either as to its own frame and Constitution, as to the qualification of the electors or the elected, as to the great and fundamental point of the succession to the Crown, was made without due authority.

If we turn to Ireland itself, what do gentlemen think of the power of that Parliament, which, without any fresh delegation from its Protestant constituents, associates to itself all the Catholic electors, and thus destroys a fundamental distinction on which it was formed? God forbid that I should object to or blame any of these measures! I am only stating the extent to which the principle (that Parliament has no authority to decide upon the present measure) will lead; and, if it be admitted in one case, it must be admitted in all. Will any man say, that (although a Protestant Parliament in Ireland, chosen exclusively by Protestant constituents, has by its own inherent power, and without consulting those constituents, admitted and comprehended the Catholics who were till then, in fact, a separate community) that Parliament cannot associate itself with another Protestant community, represented by a Protestant Parliament, having one interest with itself, and similar in its Laws, its Constitution, and its established Religion? What must be said by those who have at any time been friends to any plan of Parliamentary Reform, and particularly such as have been most recently brought forward, either in Great Britain or Ireland? Whatever may have been thought of the propriety of the measure, I never heard any doubt of the competency of Parliament to consider and discuss it. Yet I defy any man to maintain the principle of those plans, without contending that, as a Member of Parliament, he possesses a right to concur in disfranchising those who sent him to Parliament, and to select others, by whom he was not elected, in their stead. I am sure that no sufficient distinction, in point of principle, can be successfully maintained for a single moment; nor should I deem it necessary to dwell on this point, in the manner I do, were I not convinced that it is connected in part with all those

false and dangerous notions on the subject of Government which have lately become too prevalent in the world. It may, in fact, be traced to that gross perversion of the principles of all political society, which rests on the supposition that there exists continually in every Government a Sovereignty *in abeyance* (as it were) on the part of the people, ready to be called forth on every occasion, or rather, on every pretence, when it may suit the purposes of the party or faction who are the advocates of this doctrine to suppose an occasion for its exertion. It is in these false principles that are contained the seeds of all the misery, desolation, and ruin, which in the present day have spread themselves over so large a proportion of the habitable globe.

These principles, Sir, are, at length, so well known and understood in their practical effects, that they can no longer hope for one enlightened or intelligent advocate, when they appear in their true colours. Yet, with all the horror we all feel, in common with the rest of the world, at the effect of them, with all the confirmed and increasing love and veneration which we feel towards the Constitution of our Country, founded as it is, both in theory and experience, on principles directly the reverse; yet, there are too many among us, who, while they abhor and reject such opinions, when presented to them in their naked deformity, suffer them in a more disguised shape to be gradually infused into their minds, and insensibly to influence and bias their sentiments and arguments on the greatest and most important discussions. This concealed poison is now more to be dreaded than any open attempt to support such principles by argument or to enforce them by arms. No society, whatever be its particular form, can long subsist, if this principle is once admitted. In every Government, there must reside somewhere a supreme, absolute, and unlimited authority. This is equally true of every lawful Monarchy—of every Aristocracy—of every pure Democracy (if indeed such a form of Government ever has existed, or ever can exist)—and of those mixed Constitutions formed and compounded from the others, which we are justly inclined to prefer to any of them. In all these Governments, indeed alike, that power may by possibility be abused, but whether the abuse is such as to justify and call for the interference of the people collectively, or, more properly speaking, of any portion of it, must always be an extreme case, and a question of the greatest and most perilous responsibility, not in law only, but in conscience and in duty, to all those who either act upon it themselves, or persuade others to do so. But no provision for such a case ever has been or can be made beforehand; it forms no chapter in any known code of laws, it can

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find no place in any system of human jurisprudence. But, above all, if such a principle can make no part of any established Constitution, not even of those where the Government is so framed as to be most liable to the abuse of its powers, it will be preposterous indeed to suppose that it can be admitted in one where those powers are so distributed and balanced as to furnish the best security against the probability of such an abuse. Shall that principle be sanctioned as a necessary part of the best Government, which cannot be admitted to exist even as an established check upon the worst! Pregnant as it is with danger and confusion, shall it be received and authorized in proportion as every reason which can ever make it necessary to recur to it is not likely to exist? Yet, Sir, I know not how it is, that, in proportion as we are less likely to have occasion for so desperate a remedy, in proportion as a Government is so framed as to provide within itself the best guard and control on the exercise of every branch of authority, to furnish the means of preventing or correcting every abuse of power, and to secure by its own natural operation, a due attention to the interest and feelings of every part of the community, in that very proportion persons have been found perverse enough to imagine, that such a Constitution admits and recognizes, as a part of it, that which is inconsistent with the nature of any Government, and, above all, inapplicable to our own.

I have said more, Sir, upon this subject than I should have thought necessary, if I had not felt that this false and dangerous mockery of the *Sovereignty of the People* is in truth one of the chief elements of Jacobinism, one of the favourite impostures to mislead the understanding, and to flatter and inflame the passions of the mass of mankind, who have not the opportunity of examining and exposing it, and that, as such, on every occasion, and in every shape in which it appears, it ought to be combated and resisted by every friend to civil order, and to the peace and happiness of mankind.

Sir, the next and not the least prevalent objection, is one which is contained in words which are an appeal to a natural and laudable, but what I must call an erroneous and mistaken, sense of national pride. It is an appeal to the generous and noble passions of a nation easily inflamed under any supposed attack upon its honour, I mean the attempt to represent the question of a Union by compact between the Parliaments of the two kingdoms as a question involving the independence of Ireland. It has been said, that no compensation could be made to any country for the surrender of its national independence. Sir, on this, as well as on every part of the question, I am desirous gentlemen should come closely to the point, that they should sift it to the bottom, and ascertain upon what

grounds and principles their opinion really rests. Do they mean to maintain that in any humiliating, in any degrading sense of the word which can be acted upon practically as a rule, and which can lead to any useful conclusion, that at any time when the government of any two separate countries unite in forming one more extensive empire, that the individuals who composed either of the former narrow societies are afterwards less members of an independent country, or to any valuable and useful purpose less possessed of political freedom or civil happiness than they were before? It must be obvious to every gentleman who will look at the subject, in tracing the histories of all the countries, the most proud of their present existing independence, of all the nations in Europe, there is not one that could exist in the state in which it now stands, if that principle had been acted upon by our forefathers; and Europe must have remained to this hour in a state of ignorance and barbarism, from the perpetual warfare of independent and petty states. In the instance of our own country, it would be a superfluous waste of time to enumerate the steps by which all its parts were formed into one kingdom; but will any man in general assert, that in all the different Unions which have formed the principal states of Europe, their inhabitants have become less free, that they have had less of which to be proud, less scope for their own exertions, than they had in their former situation? If this doctrine is to be generally maintained, what becomes of the situation at this hour of any one county of England, or of any one county of Ireland, now united under the independent Parliament of that kingdom? If it be pushed to its full extent, it is obviously incompatible with all civil society. As the former principle of the sovereignty of the people strikes at the foundation of all governments, so this is equally hostile to all political confederacy, and mankind must be driven back to what is called the state of nature.

But while I combat this general and abstract principle, which would operate as an objection to every Union between separate states, on the ground of the sacrifice of independence, do I mean to contend that there is in no case just ground for such a sentiment? Far from it: it may become, on many occasions, the first duty of a free and generous people. If there exists a country which contains within itself the means of military protection, the naval force necessary for its defence, which furnishes objects of industry sufficient for the subsistence of its inhabitants, and pecuniary resources adequate to maintaining, with dignity, the rank which it has attained among the nations of the world; if, above all, it enjoys the blessings of internal content and tranquillity, and possesses a distinct constitu-

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tion of its own, the defects of which, if any, it is within itself capable of correcting, and if that constitution be equal, if not superior, to that of any other in the world, or (which is nearly the same thing) if those who live under it believe it to be so, and fondly cherish that opinion, I can indeed well understand that such a country must be jealous of any measure, which, even by its own consent, under the authority of its own lawful government, is to associate it as a part of a larger and more extensive empire.

But, Sir, if, on the other hand, it should happen that there be a country which, against the greatest of all dangers that threaten its peace and security, has not adequate means of protecting itself without the aid of another nation; if that other be a neighbouring and kindred nation, speaking the same language, whose laws, whose customs and habits are the same in principle, but carried to a greater degree of perfection, with a more extensive commerce, and more abundant means of acquiring and diffusing national wealth; the stability of whose government—the excellence of whose constitution—is more than ever the admiration and envy of Europe, and of which the very country of which we are speaking can only boast an inadequate and imperfect resemblance;—under such circumstances, I would ask, what conduct would be prescribed by every rational principle of dignity, of honour, or of interest? I would ask, whether this is not a faithful description of the circumstances which ought to dispose Ireland to a Union? Whether Great Britain is not precisely the nation with which, on these principles, a country, situated as Ireland is, would desire to unite? Does a Union, under such circumstances, by free consent, and on just and equal terms, deserve to be branded as a proposal for subjecting Ireland to a foreign yoke? Is it not rather the free and voluntary association of two great countries, which join, for their common benefit, in one empire, where each will retain its proportional weight and importance, under the security of equal laws, reciprocal affection, and inseparable interests, and which want nothing but that indissoluble connection to render both invincible?

*Non ego nec Teucris Italos parere jubebo
Nec nova regna peto; paribus se legibus ambæ
Invictæ gentes æterna in fœdera mittant.*

Sir, I have nearly stated all that is necessary for me to trouble the House with; there are, however, one or two other objections which I wish not entirely to pass over: one of them is, a general notion that a Union with Great Britain must necessarily increase one of the great evils of Ireland, by producing depopulation in

many parts of the country, and by increasing greatly the number of absentees. I do not mean to deny that this effect would, to a limited extent, take place during a part of the year; but I think it will not be difficult for me to prove, that this circumstance will be more than counterbalanced by the operation of the system in other respects.

If it be true that this measure has an inevitable tendency to admit the introduction of that British capital which is most likely to give life to all the operations of commerce, and to all the improvements of agriculture; if it be that which above all other considerations is most likely to give security, quiet, and internal repose to Ireland; if it is likely to remove the chief bar to the internal advancement of wealth and of civilization, by a more intimate intercourse with England; if it is more likely to communicate from hence those habits which distinguish this country, and which, by a continued gradation, unite the highest and the lowest orders of the community without a chasm in any part of the system; if it is not only likely to invite (as I have already said) English capital to set commerce in motion, but to offer it the use of new markets, to open fresh resources of wealth and industry; can wealth, can industry, can civilization increase among the whole bulk of the people without much more than counterbalancing the partial effect of the removal of the few individuals who, for a small part of the year, would follow the seat of legislation? If, notwithstanding the absence of Parliament from Dublin, it would still remain the centre of education and of the internal commerce of a country increasing in improvement; if it would still remain the seat of legal discussion, which must always increase with an increase of property and occupation, will it be supposed, with a view even to the interests of those whose partial interests have been most successfully appealed to; with a view either to the respectable body of the bar, to the merchant, or shopkeeper, of Dublin (if it were possible to suppose that a transaction of this sort ought to be referred to that single criterion) that they would not find their proportionate share of advantage in the general advantage of the state? Let it be remembered also, that if the transfer of the seat of Legislature may call from Ireland to England the Members of the United Parliament, yet, after the Union, property, influence and consideration in Ireland will lead, as much as in Great Britain, to all the objects of imperial ambition; and there must, consequently, exist a new incitement to persons to acquire property in that country, and to those who possess it, to reside there, and to cultivate the good opinion of those with whom they live, and to extend and improve their influence and connections.

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But, Sir, I need not dwell longer on argument, however it may satisfy my own mind, because we can on this question refer to experience. I see every gentleman anticipates that I allude to Scotland. What has been the result of the Union there? A Union, give me leave to say, as much opposed, and by much the same arguments, prejudices, and misconceptions, as are urged, at this moment, creating too the same alarms, and provoking the same outrages, as have lately taken place in Dublin. Look at the metropolis of Scotland: the population of Edinburgh has been more than doubled since the Union, and a new city added to the old. But we may be told, that Edinburgh has engrossed all the commerce of that country, and has those advantages which Dublin cannot expect. Yet while Edinburgh, deprived of its Parliament, but retaining, as Dublin would retain, its Courts of Justice; continuing, as Dublin would continue, the resort of those whose circumstances would not permit them to visit a distant metropolis; continuing, as Dublin would continue, the seat of national education, while Edinburgh has baffled all the predictions of that period, what has been the situation of Glasgow? The population of Glasgow, since the Union, has increased in the proportion of between five and six to one: look at its progress in manufactures; look at its general advantages, and tell me what ground there is, judging by experience in aid of theory, for those gloomy apprehensions which have been so industriously excited.

There remains, Sir, another general line of argument, which I have already anticipated, and I hope answered, that the commercial privileges now enjoyed by Ireland, and to which it owes so much of its prosperity, would be less secure than at present. I have given an answer to that already, by stating, that they are falsely imputed to the independence of the Irish Parliament, for that they are, in fact, owing to the exercise of the voluntary discretion of the British Parliament, unbound by compact, prompted only by its natural disposition to consider the interests of Ireland the same as its own; and if that has been done while Ireland is only united to us in the imperfect and precarious manner in which it is, while it has a separate Parliament, notwithstanding the commercial jealousies of our own manufacturers; if under these circumstances we have done so, if we have done so with no other connection than that which now subsists, and while Ireland has no share in our representation; what fresh ground can there be for apprehension, when she will have her proportionate weight in the Legislature, and will be united with us as closely as Lancashire or Yorkshire, or any other county in Great Britain?

Sir, I have seen it under the same authority to which I am sorry

so often to advert, that the linen trade would be injured, and that there will be no security for its retaining its present advantages. I have already stated to you (and with that very authority in my favour) that those advantages are at present precarious, and that their security can only arise from compact with Great Britain. Such a compact this measure would establish in the most solemn manner; but besides this, Sir, the natural policy of this country, not merely its experienced liberality, but the identity of interests after a Union, would offer a security worth a thousand compacts.

Sir, the only other general topic of objection is that upon which great pains have been taken to raise an alarm in Ireland—the idea that the main principle of the measure was to subject Ireland to a load of debt and an increase of taxes, and to expose her to the consequences of all our alledged difficulties and supposed necessities.

Sir, I hope the zeal, the spirit, and the liberal and enlarged policy of this country, has given ample proof that it is not from a pecuniary motive that we seek a Union. If it is not desirable on the grounds I have stated, it cannot be recommended for the mere purpose of taxation; but to quiet any jealousy on this subject, here again let us look to Scotland: Is there any instance where, with 45 Members on her part and 513 on ours, that part of the united kingdom has paid more than its proportion to the general burdens? Is it then, Sir, any ground of apprehension, that we are likely to tax Ireland more heavily when she becomes associated with ourselves!—To tax in its due proportion the whole of the empire, to the utter exclusion of the idea of the predominance of one part of society over another, is the great characteristic of British finance, as equality of laws is of the British Constitution.

But, Sir, in addition to this, if we come to the details of this proposition, it is in our power to fix, for any number of years which shall be thought fit, the proportion by which the contribution of Ireland, to the expences of the State, shall be regulated; that these proportions shall not be such as would make a contribution greater than the necessary amount of its own present necessary expences of a separate kingdom; and, even after that limited period, the proportion of the whole contribution, from time to time, might be made to depend on the comparative produce, in each kingdom, of such general taxes as might be thought to afford the best criterion of their respective wealth. Or, what I should hope would be found practicable, the system of internal taxation in each county might gradually be so equalized and assimilated, on the leading articles, as to make all rules of specific proportion unnecessary, and to secure, that Ireland shall never be taxed but in proportion as we tax ourselves.

The application of these principles, however, will form matter of future discussion—I mention them only as strongly shewing, from the misrepresentation which has taken place on this part of the subject, how incumbent it is upon the House to receive these propositions, and to adopt, after due deliberation, such resolutions as may record to Ireland the terms upon which we are ready to meet her: and, in the mean time, let us wait, not without impatience, but without dissatisfaction, for that moment, when the effect of reason and discussion may reconcile the minds of men in that kingdom, to a measure which I am sure will be found as necessary for their peace and happiness, as it will be conducive to the general security and advantage of the British empire.

Sir, it remains to be my duty to lay these resolutions before the House, wishing that the more detailed discussion of them may be reserved to a future day.

RESOLUTIONS.

“ First, That in order to promote and secure the essential interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and to consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the British empire, it will be adviseable to concur in such measures as may best tend to unite the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland into one kingdom, in such manner, and on such terms and conditions as may be established by acts of the respective Parliaments of His Majesty’s said kingdoms.

“ Second, That it appears to this Committee that it would be fit to propose as the first article to serve as a basis of the said Union, that the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland shall, upon a day to be agreed upon, be united into one kingdom, by the name of the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland*.

“ Third, That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that the succession to the Monarchy and the Imperial Crown of the said United kingdoms shall continue limited and settled, in the same manner as the Imperial Crown of the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland now stands limited and settled, according to the existing laws, and to the terms of the Union between England and Scotland.

“ Fourth, That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that the said united kingdom be presented in one and the same Parliament, to be styled the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and that such a number of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and such a number of Members of the House of Commons as shall be

hereafter agreed upon by acts of the respective Parliaments as aforesaid, shall sit and vote in the said Parliament on the part of Ireland, and shall be summoned, chosen, and returned, in such manner as shall be fixed by an act of the Parliament of Ireland previous to the said Union; and that every Member hereafter to sit and vote in the said Parliament of the United Kingdom shall, until the said Parliament shall otherwise provide, take, and subscribe the same oaths, and make the same declaration as are by law required to be taken, subscribed, and made, by the Members of the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland.

“ Fifth, That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that the churches of England and Ireland, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, shall be preserved as now by law established.

“ Sixth, That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that His Majesty's subjects in Ireland shall at all times hereafter be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing in respect of trade and navigation, in all ports and places belonging to Great Britain, and in all cases with respect to which treaties shall be made by His Majesty, his heirs or successors, with any foreign power, as His Majesty's subjects in Great Britain; that no duty shall be imposed on the import or export between Great Britain and Ireland of any articles now duty free; and that on other articles there shall be established, for a time to be limited, such a moderate rate of equal duties as shall, previous to the Union, be agreed upon and approved by the respective Parliaments, subject, after the expiration of such limited time, to be diminished equally with respect to both kingdoms, but in no case to be increased; that all articles which may at any time hereafter be imported into Great Britain from foreign parts, shall be importable through either kingdom into the other, subject to the like duties and regulations as if the same were imported directly from foreign parts; that where any articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom, are subject to any internal duty in one kingdom, such countervailing duties (over and above any duties on import to be fixed as aforesaid) shall be imposed as shall be necessary to prevent any inequality in that respect: and that all other matters of trade and commerce other than the foregoing, and than such others as may before the Union be specially agreed upon for the due encouragement of the agriculture and manufactures of the respective kingdoms, shall remain to be regulated from time to time by the United Parliament.

“ Seventh, That for the like purpose it would be fit to propose,

that the charge arising from the payment of the interest or sinking fund for the reduction of the principal of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively. That for a number of years to be limited, the future ordinary expences of the United Kingdom, in peace or war, shall be defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland jointly, according to such proportions as shall be established by the respective Parliaments previous to the Union; and that after the expiration of the time to be so limited, the proportions shall not be liable to be varied, except according to such rates and principles as shall be in like manner agreed upon previous to the Union.

“ Eighth, That for the like purpose it would be fit to propose, that all laws in force at the time of the Union, and that all the Courts of Civil or Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction within the respective kingdoms, shall remain as now by law established within the same, subject only to such alterations or regulations from time to time as circumstances may appear to the Parliament of the United Kingdom to require.

“ That the foregoing Resolutions be laid before His Majesty with an humble Address, assuring His Majesty that we have proceeded with the utmost attention to the consideration of the important objects recommended to us in His Majesty's gracious Message:

“ That we entertain a firm persuasion that a *complete and entire Union* between Great Britain and Ireland, founded on equal and liberal principles, on the similarity of Laws, Constitution, and Government, and on a sense of mutual interests and affections, by promoting the security, wealth, and commerce of the respective kingdoms, and by allaying the distractions which have unhappily prevailed in Ireland, must afford fresh means of opposing at all times an effectual resistance to the destructive projects of our foreign and domestic enemies, and must tend to confirm and augment the stability, power, and resources of the empire.

“ Impressed with these considerations, we feel it our duty humbly to lay before His Majesty such propositions as appear to us best calculated to form the basis of such a settlement, leaving it to His Majesty's wisdom, at such time and in such manner as His Majesty, in his parental solicitude for the happiness of his People, shall judge fit, to communicate these Propositions to his Parliament of Ireland, with whom we shall be at all times ready to concur in all such measures as may be found most conducive to the accomplishment of this great and salutary work. And we trust that, after full and mature consideration, such a settlement may be framed and

established, by the deliberative consent of the Parliaments of both kingdoms, as may be conformable to the sentiments, wishes, and real interests of His Majesty's faithful subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, and may unite them inseparably in the full enjoyment of the blessings of our free and invaluable Constitution, in the support of the honour and dignity of His Majesty's Crown, and in the preservation and advancement of the welfare and prosperity of the whole British empire."

Mr. SHERIDAN rose, and spoke to the following effect:—
Sir, I know how difficult it always is to make any impression on men's minds, even by argument and obvious fact, if the imagination has been dwelling with delight on great or difficult subjects, or the attention detained by animated and flowery declamation. The right honourable gentleman, who has just sat down, with a great display of eloquence, introduced this question, and only talents great as his own could be expected to produce that effect in their exertion, which it is to be apprehended the speech the House has just heard very generally produced. It is, however, easy on some questions to arouse those feelings, in the fullness of which the most vigilant may be deceived, and the most cautious misled. But much as I admire the right honourable gentleman's talents in debate—indeed, in the same proportion that I do admire those talents, I must critically pursue him in the mazes of his dextrous declamation; I must narrowly watch him from the avenues to national prejudice, up to the source and fountain of national passion. The right honourable gentleman yields to no man in charms of diction, and as beauty captivates sometimes to such a degree that reason is superseded, and the sober calculations of prudence abandoned for the more dazzling though airy speculations of a romantic but fertile fancy. Thus the power of his mind in the selection and application of epithets fascinate the thoughtless, and may seduce the unsuspecting. There are some questions on the discussion of which it becomes the Members of this House to be suspicious of talents and eloquence, whatever may be the weight of phrase in which declarations of rectitude of intention may be conceived, and in spite of every appearance of honesty of purpose. I hope, Sir, the House will not be led away by the seductions of eloquence and the attractive force of talent; but that every man who hears me, every man who cherishes in sincerity a love of freedom, and a genuine respect for the principles of that Constitution which in the purity of its operations is freedom, that every well-wisher of the British empire, that those who entertain not enmity but friendship towards Ireland, will this night

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distinguish between the flowing and rapid elocution of an admired Orator, and the steady and well-tempered voice of unaffected Reason. The whole world knows that never was there a period when fine speeches more powerfully affected the public, and never a time when, from fancied security or habitual indifference, the public appeared less eager profoundly to examine any question. Those who cannot be hurried along with the torrent of that impetuous declamation, which more or less excites the astonishment of us all, will, however, pause to recollect the arguments, and pursue the speech of the right honourable gentleman in its elaborate detail. But, conceiving, as I do, that the House is not free from the influence ever attained over easy tempers by bold and ingenious sophistry, apprehensive that we are in the situation of men who just begin to free themselves, by a collected vigorous effort, from the chains imposed by beauty, or the seductive allurements of an amorous sportive imagination, I must adjure the House not to dispose of a question that is perhaps to decide for ever whether a great and generous nation is to retain its independence, and by implication, to determine whether a set of representatives, chosen by a free people, must vote themselves out of existence, and give up the liberties, the property, the acknowledged constitutional rights of their constituents, to the domination of a power, that, under the mask of friendship, has introduced among them a force, originally said to be intended solely for their defence against a daring insidious enemy, whom all deprecate, but who is not more to be detested than the pretended friend who assists only that he may acquire confidence enough to delude, and strength enough to destroy. I must think the House has been hurried along by the right honourable gentleman from one degree of transport to another, until, in the groves of his elysium, they have been elated with scenes of grandeur, and fatigued with that variety, or enfeebled with that richness of prospect, which is to render inquiry loathsome, and which will inevitably prepare the human mind for the reception of any doctrines, however wild; and any assurance of future advantage, however illusory. I took an opportunity last week of opposing the measure of Legislative Union with Ireland, in the first stage of the discussion, which, as matter of course, was to lead to that question. I did so then, as well from a conviction that measures of such magnitude and of such novelty should always be opposed in the infancy of their progress, as in the contemplation of what I naturally anticipated would be the effect of the eloquence of the right honourable gentleman. I then said, what I am at this moment prepared to repeat, after much considering the subject, that under the present circumstances of Ireland, in this

crisis of her convulsed and necessarily disordered system of policy and general government, it is not only impolitic, but unsafe to urge, nay, even to agitate, the discussion of topics, in the issues of which are to be seen developing themselves, the poison and the horrors which are to lay the most hardy and stout of heart prostrate at the feet of a British Minister—that are to intimidate and appal the most heroic spirits. Ireland, in her present temper, must be beaten into this measure, and that Minister who shall make the bold experiment of flogging a whole nation into stupid beings, insensible alike to the duty she may owe to herself, insensible to the rights of the present generation, and the interests of the race yet unborn, as much as to the arrogance and cupidity of those who shall inflict the blow, or direct the torture—such a Minister may have secured his minions, but it may not be altogether unbecoming him, if he be desirous ultimately to prevail, to measure his power by the force of his antagonists, and in the estimation of his means of victory, to seek an antidote against national pride and local attachments. It was after very solemnly and very fully considering these, and matters such as these, that I opposed on the evening to which I have alluded, the measure at present under discussion; but the right honourable gentleman appeared at that time, as he continues to do this evening, to think differently. But, except the right honourable gentleman, and a few who sit near him, I scarce suppose there are many persons in the country, I hope but very few Members in this House, who have not seen good reason within this day or two, entirely to change their opinions of this great constitutional question. Seeing the manner in which the subject was brought forward in Ireland, and in the recollection of the fate of the question in the Parliament of that kingdom, it might be doubted whether the right honourable gentleman would persevere in the measure; but when we consider how solemnly he has pledged himself that it should be the favourite object of the remainder of his political life to effect a Legislative Union of the two kingdoms, that no weight of personal labour, that no loss of popularity, that no opposition of friends, and no clamour of opponents on this, or on the other side of the water, should deter him from pursuing that object, from doing that which he held to be necessary to the preservation of Ireland; necessary, indeed, to the existence of the two countries; we are not to wonder if to this hour he continues to set all experience at defiance, and, in the face of the Irish nation, to spurn the assertion of her rights, to fawn and flatter her guileless mind, and by seeming to respect her declared, unequivocal opinion, to lull her into inactivity, the more successfully to enslave her for ever. But let not the right honourable gentleman

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deceive himself whilst he is exerting his ingenuity to deceive Ireland. Let him remember, Sir, that some plots have been so closely wrought, some measures of surprise and delusion so intricately planned, and attempted to be carried into effect with such novelty of means, that the authors, the actors, even the subordinate characters in the drama, have been themselves entangled in the mazes they have contrived for innocence, and overwhelmed under the ruins of that fabric, which they have erected to overawe the independent. The right honourable gentleman has this day not quite given us the same strong pledge of his determination to persevere in the present measure, which on a former day the House received from him. We are even now to take for granted that he will persist in it, ; but although he may persevere, thank God the House has not given a pledge to support him ; and I hope and trust they will not entertain it at all. Sir, the right honourable gentleman has set England and Ireland in a perilous situation. He assumes in argument, and we are to infer that he thinks so in fact, that his power must be committed against the force of opinion in Ireland, and that the existence of Ireland as an independent nation is incompatible with his existence as a Minister. I hope the House will check his rashness : I hope we are not to be precipitated into a war against the feelings, the prejudices, the passions, and against the security of the people of Ireland ! The right honourable gentleman has sown already the most frightful dissensions in that unfortunate country. He has divided its Parliament against itself. He has held it up to scorn by libelling its measures and traducing its wisdom, and he has yet to array the British Parliament against it with all that pertinacity which distinguishes ignorance, and with the fierceness of men who are to be told that a country struggling for its liberties, only wages the war of faction, only wields the weapons of disaffection and treason. I now come to that part of the right honourable gentleman's speech, in which he has commented with such freedom of manner, has combated with such asperity of tone, a speech made some time or other by a right honourable person of the sister kingdom—Mr. Foster. And, Sir, if, without breach of order, I could suppose that there is in our gallery a stranger, who has been a Member of the Legislature of Ireland, or in the habits of hearing its debates, I am persuaded he would at once imagine the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) has detained you and the House almost half an hour to hear him in reply to the speech of that gentleman. Now, Sir, I think I can shew you, that the arguments drawn by the right honourable gentleman opposite to me, from the topics in the speech of the honourable Member of the sister kingdom, do not in any one

tittle apply to the present question. He has attempted, indeed, to shew the inconsistency of sentiment by which he tells us the conduct of Mr. Foster is to be distinguished. Mr. Foster's opinion was, that the adoption of the commercial propositions was necessary to the existence of Ireland, and that they could not be rejected without incurring the certain risk of sowing dissensions, and of exciting commercial jealousies. This, according to the right honourable gentleman, was that Statesman's opinion in 1785, and the inconsistency consists, as he has this night told us, in his having insisted in his published letters, that the adjustment in 1782 was final. Now, Sir, the right honourable gentleman himself entertained the same opinion at the period alluded to, and instead of the tame language of Mr. Foster, that the rejection of those propositions would lead to commercial jealousies—we then had the dashing periods of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Great Britain ringing in our ears—that if those propositions were not adopted, he could not continue to hold his situation. Yet neither had any ill consequences arisen to Ireland from the rejection of them, nor had that, which would have been a still greater calamity, befallen the country—the resignation of the right honourable gentleman. Now, how does the argument stand as it really affects Mr. Foster? Why, he imagined that the commercial prosperity of Ireland would be advantaged, if those propositions were adopted; and certainly there was no inconsistency of sentiment in his present opposition to Legislative Union, because the question of the propositions was purely commercial, whilst that of the present period is one which is to decide the independence of the Irish Parliament. But, Sir, the principal reason why I take up this question now is, that the right honourable gentleman has this evening developed his plan of intimidation and corruption. He says, that the commercial advantages derived by Ireland from her connection with this country, are necessary to her existence; and since, in the same breath, he adds, that to have those advantages continued to her, Union is indispensable; the inference obviously is, that she must abandon all her commercial advantages, if she reject the proffered alliance with Great Britain. Hence I do contend, Sir, that the people of Ireland cannot come with unbiassed minds to this discussion; and it is impossible to suppose that a free choice is left to the Parliament of that country. If we wanted additional corroboration of the evidence, that such is his system, we had it amply afforded us in those parts of his detail which followed. He tells you Ireland ought to consent to a Union, because she is incapable of defending herself against her internal and external enemies without the assistance of her powerful

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neighbour—[A cry of “Hear! hear!”]—Mr. Sheridan insisted that the inference was irresistible—that unless she consented to a Union, Ireland was to be deprived of all her commercial advantages—Is this generous: is it fit to hold out such language to Ireland; is it wise to press the discussion at this moment, and force all Ireland loudly to ask, not indeed free from anger, Why have not we had those advantages yielded to us, on which, according to the opinion of the British Minister, our prosperity depends? We must owe it to the injurious policy of Great Britain, exercised in various acts of restraint and privation these three hundred years past, that we have been deprived of those advantages which God and Nature so eminently adapts our country to afford us. But, Sir, let His Majesty’s Ministers grant to Ireland those advantages of which they boast—they may be conceded to her without Union—they can be improved by her without abjectly surrendering her independence. Thus much with regard to her means of acquiring distinction as a commercial nation. And as to her power of defending herself, does not the right honourable gentleman know that her volunteers have defended Ireland? and what they were equal to in a period of considerable danger, during the American war, when the enemy rode triumphant on their coasts, and in our channel, surely they are at present as capable of achieving in the zenith of our envied superiority as a naval power. It is a most cruel taunt uttered in the face of the whole people of Ireland, to say, that while you have 40,000 British troops in the heart of their country, you will awe them by the presence of such a force; reproach them with weakness, notwithstanding that you have had 200,000 of her best inhabitants to support you in the present war, while 100,000 fighting men of their nation have fallen in your battles in the West Indies and elsewhere. What is this but to say, it is true you have assisted us; but you are now naked; you are ignorant; you are uncivilized; you are weak; and if you do not accept from us the benefits we offer you, we will proceed to confer them upon you by force. Look to what the right honourable gentleman says, when he tells you he will leave it to the unbiassed judgement of the Irish people and the independent discretion of the Irish Parliament finally to decide on the present question. Are the recent dismissals from office in that kingdom the proofs he would exhibit to us of his settled purpose to leave it to that Parliament to adopt or reject the measure? It is truly a mockery to tell the Parliament this: Parliament must see that what has been done in the case of individuals may also be acted over again in the instance of the Legislature; and that the same power which effected the dismissal of Sir John Par-

nell, may be successfully employed to dissolve the Parliament. Will gentlemen only be so kind to themselves as to reflect for a moment on the tendency of such proceedings? If in the Parliament of the sister kingdom those measures are to be adopted, the same and a worse tyranny may be acted in our own. Sir, I am afraid the political creed of the adherents of the Minister in Ireland has been adopted by his supporters in the British Senate. I do sincerely believe, that if any one person who now supports His Majesty's Ministers were to vote with me this night, he would be dismissed to-morrow from all his places. We are to reflect on these things, Sir, while we carry along our minds to that part of the right honourable gentleman's speech, where he peremptorily says, "I do think the measure good for Ireland and good for this country, but time shall be given to the people to examine it, time shall be given for their heats to subside, time shall be given to the Parliament of the two countries fully and deliberately to discuss it."

Now, Sir, what do these fine limbs of a sentence collectively mean? Why that time is to be given for the operation of corruption, time to intimidate the people of Ireland, time for the peremptory dismissal of the opposers of the measures, time for the dissolution of Parliament. But the right honourable gentleman, in order to conciliate our assent, assures us, that sufficient time shall be allowed to examine his proposal with cool and dispassionate judgment, and that the farther discussion of it in Ireland will not be enforced until the heats and animosities, to which it has already given rise, shall have completely subsided; but what is this in reality but to give more time for the renewed operation of corruption, and for a more general display of intimidating measures in the form of new dismissals, against which the Irish Parliament may protest in vain? Nor was it the right honourable gentleman alone who attempted to justify these measures. I have heard them also justified by an honourable friend (Mr. Canning), and never did I hear any thing with more poignant regret; for what sensation but that of sorrow and regret could arise in my mind, when I heard that honourable friend plead the cause of bold and barefaced corruption, and thus cloud and contaminate with its foul fog and baneful breath the pure and early morning of his political life? Would he now tell us that the right honourable gentleman had given a determined pledge, and could not now recede? Why did he? Who called upon him to speak? Was it to encourage his friends in Ireland by a display of his resolution? But that was unavailing, as the discussion and decision took place there before that encouragement could reach them; but as to the charge of urging intimidation, neither

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the right honourable gentleman nor his honourable friend, who answered me on a former occasion, had thought proper to say a word. His honourable friend (Mr. Canning), from his parliamentary standing, could not, indeed, have taken any part in the violation of the compact in 1782; and therefore his right honourable friend stepped generously forward and claimed all the shame, guilt, and treachery of it to himself. Like another Nisus he threw his broad shield over his beloved Euryclus to protect him from the vengeful resentment of the Irish nation, calling out to them—*Me, me, I, I am the man; wreak all your vengeance upon me*—

*Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum,
O Rutuli; mea fraus omnis; nihil iste nec ausus,
Nec potuit*—

My honourable friend's abilities might, however, prove that *potuit*; and as to his courage, he was satisfied the House had no reason to call in question. The generous ardour of the right honourable gentleman to protect his honourable friend, was therefore only the impulse of affection.

Tantum infelicem nimium diletit amicum.

But the right honourable gentleman again repeats, that a Union is the only remedy that can heal the evils that afflict Ireland, or that can secure the salvation of both countries. He must, therefore, persist in it, and call on Parliament to assist him in the execution of the measure; he is willing, however, to wait for a more favourable opportunity, and until the Irish Parliament is convinced of its necessity. And what is that opportunity he pretends to wait for? Is it not the day and hour when Ireland shall be in a greater degree of weakness? Does he wait until he can again reproach her with her inability to defend herself, and threaten her with withdrawing those commercial favours she receives from England, and from which, he contends, are derived all the sources from which her prosperity arises? Alas! it is but too much in his power to create that moment!

Mr. Sheridan then recalled to the recollection of the House the shameful manner in which Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled from Ireland at a moment when he was supposed to have been sent over to grant to the Roman Catholics the rights and privileges which they claimed. The cup of concession was just presented to their lips, but instead of permitting them to taste of it, it was dashed in their faces. Was this the proof of a sincere desire to reconcile the Roman Catholic body? And if he is acquainted, as surely he is,

with the workings of the human heart, must he not be well aware of what men will do when so provoked? We all agree, continued Mr. Sheridan, respecting the necessity of a connection between the two countries, and that nothing could be more fatal to either than that Ireland should be possessed by the French. Should we not then seriously consider how far the enforcing of this measure may tend to favour what the right honourable gentleman calls the favourite object of the enemy, and which I really believe to be their earnest wish, namely, the invasion of Ireland. Seeing it, as I do, in this light, have I not every reason and motive for imploring the House not to give it any farther countenance? Indeed, in every view I can take of it, it appears to me not only to be dangerous, but as childish a scheme as that which the right honourable gentleman has chosen to stigmatize so frequently with that epithet.

Mr. Sheridan then proceeded to vindicate Mr. Fox from the accusation of not having followed up the resolution of 1782. He shewed that that honourable gentleman remained but two months after in office, and therefore could give it no effect; but did the right honourable gentleman himself, when he came afterwards into power, attempt to bring forward the objections which he had this night so triumphantly urged? Had he not now been fifteen years a Minister without ever endeavouring to do that which from the first he deemed to be indispensably necessary?

He has also affirmed, that an equal proportion of the Irish House of Commons, a large majority of the Irish Peers, and an equally large proportion of the people out of doors, were friendly to the measure of a Union; but if he would but look of what that division against it in the Commons was composed, he would discover that it contained almost all the country gentlemen; while, if he examined who composed that on the other side of the question, they would be almost all found to be under the influence of the Crown: if, besides this, the dismissals that had taken place in spite of the fair character of those who were removed, thus unjustly removed from office, it was a shame to speak of any thing like an equality between those who opposed and those who supported the proposed Union. Now as to the large proportion of the people out of doors, who are said to be favourable to it, where were they to be found? He knew of no place but Cork that expressed any thing like approbation of it, and, perhaps, Limerick also—but was there not a lure thrown out to the former, that they should have a dock-yard built there? and, on the other hand, was not the linen trade menaced with being deprived of some of the means that tended to encourage it? Thus, to gain his ends, he held out a bribe to the South, and

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threw out a threat against the North—some inducements are also held out to the Roman Catholics; a diminution of tithes, and an establishment for their Clergy. But what prevents these promises from being now realized? If it be right to do it, ought it not to be done whether a Union is to take place or not, and Parliament be enabled, instead of holding out bribes and barter, to win by these concessions the affections and confidence of the Irish people? Another argument strongly urged in favour of the Union, is the prosperity which Scotland is said to have enjoyed since it has been united with England: but might not Scotland have attained this increase of wealth and prosperity merely by the dint of her own industry? Besides, Scotland cannot well be compared with Ireland. In Scotland the gentlemen of property are fond to reside, and to encourage trade, &c.; in Ireland it is the reverse. It is also said, that two independent Legislatures may seldom agree; and from this want of concurrence and co-operation, the most serious calamities may arise: as well say that two independent Houses of Parliament may not co-operate; because the Lords, for example, may throw out a money bill sent from the Commons, or the Commons may refuse to concur in the amendments made by the Lords. The whole of these objections are completely refuted by experience; and to insist upon such objections, would be a libel on the Constitution. French principles and Jacobinism were, as usual, introduced in the debate, and made the subject of splendid invective.—But what was Jacobinism? Was it not Jacobinism that pretended to make other States more *free, independent, and prosperous*, than it found them? Was it not Jacobinism that called on other countries to *resign their freedom, their independence, and their Constitutions*, with a promise to substitute something better in their place? If so, was not the right honourable gentleman, in proposing the present measure, acting the part of an ARCH-JACOBIN?

It is not my intention, Sir, to oppose going into a Committee, but I shall certainly object to your leaving the chair, for the purpose of moving two Resolutions, which I shall, in case the propositions should be carried, wish to have placed before them, for the purpose of taking off, in some degree, that jealousy which the Irish Parliament, I am afraid, will be apt to entertain of their passing this House, after the measure of Union having been so decidedly rejected in the House of Commons of Ireland. Mr. Sheridan then read the following Resolutions:

“ That no measures can have a tendency to improve and perpetuate the ties of amity and connection now existing between Great Britain and Ireland, which have not for their basis the manifest,

fair, and free consent and approbation of the Parliaments of the two countries.

“ That whoever shall endeavour to obtain the appearance of such consent and approbation in either country, by employing the influence of Government for the purposes of corruption or intimidation, is an enemy to His Majesty and to the Constitution.”

Lord HAWKESBURY said, that used as he was to the invincible opposition of the honourable gentleman to every measure proposed by His Majesty's Ministers, he was by no means surprized that he should object to the present propositions. There were, however, several parts of the honourable gentleman's speech which had roused his attention, and made such an impression on his mind, that he could not but request the attention of the House till he made a few comments on them. And here he would beg leave to remind the House of the motion which the honourable gentleman had brought forward last session relative to an inquiry into the conduct of the Irish Government. In that business this House was desired by the honourable gentleman to interpose its authority respecting measures which were resolved on, and carried into execution, in consequence of acts passed by the Irish Legislature; and certainly there appeared a considerable degree of inconsistency with the motion then made by the honourable gentleman, and the opposition he gave to the measure now before the House, as that opposition was, in a great degree, founded on the interference of the British Parliament in what had so recently been rejected by one of the branches of the Irish Legislature. There was something very extraordinary too in the situation of that country at the time the motion he alluded to had been made, and what it happens to be when the honourable gentleman objects to the measure now under the consideration of the House. He begged gentlemen to recollect, that at the time the honourable gentleman made his motion for an inquiry, the country of Ireland was in the very height of a most daring rebellion, and the interference of this House was then required. Now Ireland, comparatively speaking, might be said to be at peace. The same interference, though intended, in his opinion, to operate greatly for the benefit of Ireland, was condemned in the severest terms by the same honourable gentleman. The honourable gentleman had also made use of the word intimidation, but for what purpose he could not conceive, for his right honourable friend, in the very outset of the business, had expressly avowed the reverse, and had stated, in the most positive manner, that he would on no account wish to push the present measure, but with entire consent and approbation of the

Irish Parliament. He himself perfectly coincided with his right honourable friend; and his first and only wish was, that the present propositions might pass in order that they might be fairly considered and deliberately discussed. The honourable gentleman had something more than insinuated that the people of Ireland were against the measure of a Union; but this he begged leave to deny; and asked on what ground such an assumption could be taken up? The people of Cork and those of Limerick had expressed themselves in favour of it; and if it once came to be duly and dispassionately considered, he had no doubt but the great majority of the whole nation would view it in the same favourable light. Certainly there ought to be great allowances made for the prejudices which at first sight must inevitably operate on the minds of the people, who are allowed on all hands to have a great sensibility in matters which touched their national pride, though he thought with his right honourable friend that this national pride might, on many occasions, be erroneous and mistaken. The honourable gentleman had made use of the expression of corruption being resorted to as well as intimidation; and in support of this had adverted to the dismissal of a gentleman high in character as well as in office (Sir John Parnell). But he could by no means see there was any appearance of either in that dismissal. He should certainly call in question the sincerity of any Minister, who, having a great and momentous measure to propose, in which the most important interests of the empire were deeply involved, would suffer any gentleman to remain in so eminent a situation in the Executive Government as that honourable gentleman filled in Ireland, after he had declared that he could not, or would not, give the measure his support. He could have no reliance on a Minister who, having a most important measure to propose for the welfare of the leading interest of the empire, would content himself with giving his own personal support and exertions in favour of such measure; but he would leave his friends to vote in such a manner as to them should respectively seem best. This seemed to him to be a conduct which would militate against the sincerity of any Minister; and therefore he was clearly of opinion, the dismissal alluded to was of that nature that it could not be possibly avoided. The honourable gentleman was, however, one of the last men whom he should have expected to have heard bring forward an argument of that nature, as he had been so very strenuous in condemning the recall of a Lord Lieutenant of the country, who had acted expressly on the same principle. Finding the measures which he proposed were objected to by gentlemen high in official situations there, he dismissed them immediately; and

when he was recalled from that high office, perhaps in some respects for those very dismissals, the subject of his recal was, by the honourable gentleman, and those with whom he acted, made a matter of serious and grievous complaint against His Majesty's Ministers. His Lordship said, that he coincided with his right honourable friend, and he joined also in opinion with the honourable gentleman in deprecating the system which had so long been pursued towards the Irish nation, and which he confessed, had for a series of years held them in a state of the greatest degradation, till the year 1782. But still he contended, that the settlement of 1782 was not final. Concessions had been made one after another. The repeal of the Declaratory Act did not give sufficient satisfaction, and he begged leave to call the recollection of the House to the proceedings of Lord Northington's Administration, and the act of the renunciation of the power of the British Parliament over that of Ireland. After these came the Irish propositions, which, on some slight idea of dictating a compact to the Irish Parliament, had caused it to reject a measure which was actually a boon from this country, and which at the time was objected to by the honourable gentleman, or at least by those who acted with him, on the ground of their being highly injurious to the manufacturing and commercial interests of this country. Petitions were likewise sent from every manufacturing town in the kingdom to the same effect—but, thank Heaven! that narrow-minded policy has now subsided, and was altogether done away. The honourable gentleman had attempted to weaken the remarks made by his right honourable friend on the conduct of the Irish Parliament on the question of the Regency—but what was that question? It was the integrity of the empire, and certainly the conduct of the Irish Parliament in that proceeding might have been productive of the most injurious consequences, and have altogether interrupted and disunited that integrity; for had it not been for an accident, the Irish Parliament would have conferred the Regency upon one person, and the English Parliament upon another; so that instead of being two Legislatures acting under one Executive Head, as by the settlement of 1782 they were to do, they would have been acting under two Executive Heads; and he thought the inference on this point drawn by his right honourable friend were conclusive and unanswerable. His Lordship observed, that much disadvantage arose to this country from so large a part of our army being obliged to be sent to, and remain in Ireland; for thereby our exertions in the West Indies, and other parts abroad, were very considerably crippled. Much had been said by the honourable gentleman as to the commercial prosperity of Ireland, in consequence of

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the independence of her Parliament ; but whatever that prosperity may have been, the course of events which had for some years past taken place in that country, had firmly riveted him in the opinion that there must be something radically wrong in the internal situation of that country. The interests of the Protestant and Catholic were so distinct and different, and formed such continual food for jealousy, that he was afraid nothing but a grand Legislative Union would ever be able effectually to reconcile them one to the other. Hitherto the concessions that had been made to the Catholics of the elective franchise, and other extensions of favour, had not, it was allowed by the honourable gentleman, produced the desired effect. If Ireland had continued prosperous and tranquil since 1782, he should have entertained hopes that the interest of the empire might be secured, without recurring to the measure under consideration this night : but the reverse had been the case, and one subject of discontent had alternately risen after another, till it had terminated in the foulest and most unnatural rebellion. This he was convinced had been produced by a scandalous Jacobin conspiracy, headed and carried on by persons, one of whom had formerly been the friend of the honourable gentleman opposite to him, though he had no doubt he had been deluded as to his intentions. In all questions of this nature, his Lordship said, he should always wish to take experience for his guide ; and in so doing in the present case, he could not take a stronger ground, than by adverting to the situation of Scotland, and the striking benefits which she had derived from a Union with this country, though the same arguments had been used with equal energy, and with a proportionate zeal by the opposers of a Union on that occasion ; but still that best and most unerring of guides, experience, had clearly shewn that all the predictions of those days, as to the ruinous and impolitic consequences of the measure, had been altogether satisfied, and Scotland was enjoying a degree of the most flattering and daily increasing prosperity. He had no doubt but Ireland would reap the same advantages, if she was once brought to a fair and full adoption of the same beneficial measures. The honourable gentleman, as well as others in a different place, had laid considerable stress on the disadvantage that would result to Ireland from the number of absentees, which would be greatly increased by the removal of so many men of fortune to the Imperial Parliament. This argument, however, he could by no means see in the same point of view. At all events, however, he was convinced that it would be counterbalanced by the introduction of a great deal of active capital into the country, which would of course take over many persons from this kingdom to reside in Ire-

land. The bringing the whole of the two nations under one sovereign, independent Legislature, would also make the people of property in Ireland more studious and desirous to cultivate the welfare of the country ; and the prosperity of it must be greatly advanced by the certainty that the great mass of property in Great Britain would become pledged for the security of property in Ireland ; a guarantee which could not fail of producing the best and most inestimable effects. The prosperity and tranquillity of this country were owing to the great value every man set upon the Constitution ; and when this Constitution became the property of the Irish people, it could not fail to operate the same blessings in their favour, in spite of the machinations of every Jacobin wish to the contrary. It would be my desire, Sir, said his Lordship, to extend the blessings of this Constitution to all my fellow creatures ; it is my particular wish that the people of Ireland should derive every benefit from it that results to us : I am desirous to pledge my own property in Great Britain, as well as the property of Britons in general, for the security of property in Ireland ; but, Sir, I beg leave to repeat, that I wish this matter to be fairly and fully discussed, chiefly that the people of Ireland may see what we are willing to do in support of their interests ; and I would not wish the measure to be adopted but by the wish and voice of the people and of the Parliament of both countries ; and I deprecate the idea of using either corruption or intimidation as much as the honourable Member, or any one else can do. These, Sir, are the reasons which actuate me to vote for the present propositions being submitted to a Committee of the whole House, by way of recording what we were willing to do in advancement of the interests of Ireland.

Mr. SHERIDAN spoke in explanation, and denied that he had voted on the Irish propositions, as stated by his Lordship.

Dr. LAWRENCE contended, that the inference drawn by the noble Lord who spoke last, as to the inconsistency of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) having made a motion for an inquiry last session, and now opposing the present measure, was not well founded. The difference of the time, as well as of the situation of the two countries, was, in his opinion, the reverse of what the noble Lord had conceived them to be. When the measure was first introduced in the House, he was not clearly decided that he should vote against it ; but since that time, circumstances relative to it had taken place elsewhere, which made him deeply regret that the measure had ever been brought forward at all. One branch of the Legislature of Ireland had, in the most decided manner rejected it, and he was therefore extremely sorry that any farther attempt should be

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made to revive it here at the present moment. Ireland seemed at present to be in a state of considerable irritation; and it was certainly of the highest importance that such a disposition should not be aggravated by the stimulation of any jealousy which they may have conceived of an intended attempt on the independence of their Parliament.

Before he proceeded any farther, however, he found it necessary to make some few observations on what had fallen from the noble Lord relative to the subject of dismissals. He could not conceive that the two cases alluded to, and endeavoured to be assimilated by the noble Lord, were in any degree analogous. There was a great difference between one individual having an objection to a single specific measure like the present, and several individuals who compose part of the Councils of a Lord Lieutenant, with whom he is to carry on the business of the Government, thwarting his measures on all occasions, and preventing him from carrying into effect the duties of the high official situation to which he was appointed. Such was the case in the instance alluded to, and to act otherwise than that noble Personage had done, was impossible. Much had been said by the noble Lord who spoke last, as well as by the right honourable mover of the present measure, on the subject of the settlement made in 1782, not being final or complete. Something, it was asserted, was left to be done, in order to fulfil what was only in part executed. He had not heard the sentiments of the gentlemen who composed the Administration of that day, with whom the measure had originated, and by whom it had been carried to the length it had proceeded; but he had received an explanation of it from one gentleman who formed a part of that Administration (Mr. Burke); a gentleman whose pre-eminent abilities had been for many years the admiration, not only of that House, but of the country at large—whose great endowments yielded to nothing but the goodness of his heart, and the love of his country. This gentleman had assured him, that what remained to be done by way of forming the completion of that settlement made in 1782 was no more than a mere additional arrangement respecting the commercial interests of the two countries, which was intended at some future favourable opportunity to be settled, by way of compact, between the respective Parliaments; and that, as to every constitutional purpose, the settlement was held to be perfectly final and conclusive.

Doctor Lawrence then adverted to the circumstance of the present measure being introduced this night under the name of a Union, after one of the parties which was to give its assent to the

marriage had absolutely and unequivocally rejected it. How could that be called a marriage or union to which the consent of one of the parties was wanting? A marriage was a matter of that delicate nature, that if the parties contracting it were not agreeable to each other, the closer they were drawn together by the bond, the farther, in fact, they were put asunder as to every beneficial and happy consequence which might be expected to result from so tender and intimate a connection. To press forward, therefore, a matter of so much moment and importance to the general interests of the empire, by the Parliament of this country, while it is objected to in the strongest manner, and in the most severe terms, by the party who ought to form the other part of the contract, seemed to him so pregnant with alarm and impending evils, that he felt he could not too warmly deprecate an event, the consequences of which might in the issue prove so truly disastrous. Amongst the various arguments which have been urged in favour of a Union in the House of Commons in Ireland, there was one which struck him as extremely curious and novel. The gentleman who advances it assigns as his principal reason, that there were ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN Placemen in that House, and therefore the independence of the Parliament was far more expensive than the country could bear.

Doctor Lawrence then observed, that it deserves to be attentively considered how far such a measure as the present, if carried into effect, would operate upon the representation of the People when brought into that House. He had frequently, he said, considered the subject as the representation now stood, and he was of opinion, that let parties prevail as they may from time to time, the general result of the votes of that House would be nearly the same. In speaking as he now did, he begged to be understood as speaking of representation of England and Wales. Where any body of men were sent from a particular place or part of the empire with local interests and local prejudices, he would not pretend to calculate how far they might influence the determinations of the House on all such points as they might chuse to exert their influence in support of. A body of men delegated from any particular place or part of the empire, especially if that body was numerous—might, if they adhered strongly together, create a very great influence in that House—and as the number proposed to be introduced from Ireland was really a very extensive one, he could not help thinking that it might produce a considerable degree of embarrassment in the business and debates of that House. How, indeed, they were to dispose of them he was at a loss to guess. In the course of the last debate in Ire-

land on the present question, it had lasted for twenty-two hours. If the majority of them should bring over their inclination for public speaking, and these came to be added to the speeches of the right honourable gentleman and others, who are in the habits of speaking here already, he could not avoid foreseeing many embarrassments which would necessarily attend so very considerable an addition to the numbers already possessed of seats in that House. Be that as it may, said he, it is of the utmost consequence, that no subject of so important a nature should be put forward, if it runs a risque of endangering the peace and tranquillity of the country, it is intended should derive a benefit from it. By what I can perceive of the state of the public mind in that country, there is too much reason to fear it is very fore, and ill-inclined to receive propositions of this nature. I am the more averse from putting it to the slightest risque, because I conceive there is no necessity for taking the matter up at the present moment. If at any future period the state of the public mind should appear to be more favourable to such a measure, and there should seem to be a prospect of their receiving it well; it is in the power of the King, with the advice of his Council, to take it up whenever he pleases; and the adoption of the measure will at all times be as complete and efficacious as if grafted on the stem of the present propositions. My dread is, that in the present seeming temper of that country, they should add inflammation to a disposition at present teeming with far too much irritability. At any rate, it may have the appearance of hanging up these propositions over their heads as an object *in terrorem*; and thus by adding to a jealousy of which the right honourable gentleman himself admits they are but too susceptible in matters which concern their national pride, a stimulus may be added to the present disorder, the evil effects of which it may be impossible to counteract. There is nothing therefore which I more feelingly deprecate, than proceeding with these propositions. It seems clear to me they can do no good, and may produce a great deal of harm. I have been happy to give my support to the generality of the measures adopted by the right honourable gentleman, and should wish to do so while he continues to prosecute the present tremendous contest. In proportion, however, as it is tremendous, it became the more necessary that we should be on the best possible terms with Ireland; and in order to do so, I should be happy to think the present propositions had never been brought forward.—I beg pardon, Sir, for having so long trespassed on the time and attention of the House, but I deemed it my duty to speak my apprehensions on the case. I shall certainly vote, Sir, for

your not leaving the chair; but if it is carried that you should do so, I do not say that I shall vote against the resolutions.

The House then divided on the question of the Speaker's leaving the chair—

Ayes, 140; Noes, 15.

Mr. GREY said, he knew of no measure more calculated to inflame Ireland, and to produce the most alarming consequences, than that which had been proposed; and he perfectly agreed with gentlemen who had spoken before, that the recording the resolutions on the Journals, and suspending them over the Irish Parliament, with a threat of attempting to adopt them the first favourable opportunity, was a step of great impolicy, which would tend to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction on the part of the sister kingdom. But it was not his intention to enter into the subject. He only wished to give notice, that if the plan was persevered in, and a bill brought in as the resolutions expressed, for the introduction of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, from Ireland into the British Parliament, he should follow that measure with a proposition to guard those new Members against the undue influence of the Crown, particularly in the mode of their election; and that he should also bring forward a proposition for amending the mode of election generally of all Members of that House.

Mr. TIERNEY agreed with Mr. Grey as to the dangerous consequences of pressing farther the present measure.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he would move his resolutions on Thursday next; and as he had heard nothing advanced against them, he concluded they were unobjectionable, and he made no doubt they would be adopted.

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that nothing had been objected against the resolutions, because they had not been before the House; they had not been moved, and consequently no observations had been made upon them; but whenever they were brought forward, there was sufficient on the face of them to shew the impropriety of suffering them to be adopted.

Lord HAWKESBURY spoke in explanation.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, the noble Lord's speech went strongly for their adoption. He had expressed his determination not to support the project of Union, unless it was fairly sanctioned by a majority in the respective Parliaments of each kingdom; and he had also expressed his abhorrence of any corrupt or undue influence being exercised to produce a majority in its favour. Now, said Mr. Sheridan, these are the very points my resolutions go to establish.

The resolutions having been read in the Committee, the House was resumed, and the Committee asked leave to sit again on Thursday next. At half past eleven o'clock, the House adjourned to Thursday next.

Thursday, February 7.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee in order to take into farther consideration His Majesty's most gracious message respecting the proposed Union with Ireland.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that according to the rules and ordinary proceedings of the House, the right honourable gentleman most undoubtedly could claim the privilege of moving the order of the day, before he (Mr. Sheridan) could attempt to move the resolutions of which he had thrown out an idea, and his intention of moving them, upon a former occasion; if, therefore, that privilege was insisted on, he must postpone his motion for the present.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that though he had waited some time in expectation of the honourable gentleman's expected motion, he was nevertheless ready to wave his privilege, and to give the precedence to the honourable gentleman.

Mr. SHERIDAN then proceeded in nearly the following terms:—Having on the two former occasions, in which the present subject was under discussion, trespassed a good deal on the attention of the House, I feel it incumbent upon me to take up as little of their time as possible now. I shall therefore only urge a few of the many reasons which might be advanced in support of the resolutions I intended to move. Indeed I think it the more incumbent on me to say less at present than I otherwise should, because, though at the commencement of the debates on this measure I had the singularity of standing alone in opposition to the right honourable gentleman's project, yet several gentlemen, knowing what the state of Ireland now is—knowing the irritation produced in the public mind by the agitation of this question—and knowing the marked disapprobation the mere suggestion of the measure has received from the Irish Parliament, are now as much convinced as I am of the impropriety of continuing to discuss it here. This consideration I should have hoped would have had some weight with the right honourable gentleman, and have taught him not to persist in that pledge which he so boldly gave in the course of the first debate on this subject. The right honourable gentleman had declared, that to accomplish a Union of the two kingdoms shall be the object of

his life ; not his political life, as on former occasions he has pledged, but his natural life. Happily, however, this House was as yet pledged to nothing, and I trust they will not join the right honourable gentleman in this. They cannot be mistaken with regard to his object, for he has fairly and candidly acknowledged it. The House will, however, do well to pause before they advance farther. As yet they have done no more than to refer to a Committee His Majesty's message, recommending it to the House to consider of the means of strengthening the connection between the two countries. The resolutions which the right honourable gentleman has moved are not yet ordered to be printed. Here the House have it in their power to stop : but the case is different if they proceed farther. The question now before us is, whether we are willing to second the pledge which the right honourable gentleman has given of devoting his life to carry this favourite project ; a pledge, as I have already observed, not of his political, but of his natural life—[Here Mr. Pitt smiled]—Yes, the right honourable gentleman may smile at his pledges ! Does he smile that they should be thought sincere ? I know that he has before now pledged himself to perform many things which he has not yet found it convenient to accomplish. When the Irish propositions were brought forward, the right honourable gentleman declared, that unless they were agreed to, he could not continue in office, because he could no longer be an useful Minister. These propositions were, however, rejected, and the right honourable gentleman smiled at the pledge. He still remained in office, and had of course discovered that there was no necessity for keeping his pledge, since he could be an useful Minister without the Irish propositions. I know not how he means to dispose of his present pledge. He may smile at it if he please ; but will the people of Ireland smile with him ? The right honourable gentleman has before now often duped the people with his pledges, and he may, perhaps, think proper at last to abandon this : be this as it may, however, nothing could have worse consequences, nothing could so much tend to increase the evils which at present exist in Ireland, as this House sanctioning the present pledge of the right honourable gentleman.

The effect of the pledge which the right honourable gentleman has given, must, however, be considerable on the people of Ireland. It will produce much irritation, and inflame all those discontents which have already occasioned so much misery in that country. Were it adopted by this House, the mischief would still be greater. It is, indeed, very difficult to conceive what object he proposes to himself by proceeding in this measure. What advantage will his

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argument of the necessity of a Union receive from the House joining in his pledge, when the Irish House of Commons has already decided against it? If the House sanctions the project of the right honourable gentleman, the two Houses of Commons of Great Britain and Ireland will be placed in opposition to each other, and the situation of these nations will be more alarming and frightful than that in which any two countries professing amity for each other ever before stood.

Does the right honourable gentleman not know, that while he declares his determination to persist in this measure, the Irish people will fancy they can easily penetrate the means to which he will resort to carry it? On this point, indeed, they cannot be easily deceived: the right honourable gentleman has declared himself openly, and the measures to which he has already had recourse so plainly indicate his intentions, that there is little room for doubt or mistake on this head. If he do not succeed on the present occasion, the people of Ireland must be convinced that he only waits for a more favourable opportunity: they must know that he only waits for a moment when Ireland shall be more weak to carry his favourite project, and that intimidation and corruption are the engines he proposes to use. The means to which he would resort must be known the moment that he declares he will persevere. But it ought to be recollected, that the Irish Parliament do not look upon their connection with us as a boon—they claim to be independent. If, then, the right honourable gentleman has sincerely pledged himself, there is no other course left for Ireland to take, but to guard against the influence and the power of the British Parliament. It has been observed, that Ireland cannot exist without the support of this country; and a noble friend of the right honourable gentleman has held out a threat of withdrawing from Ireland that protection to which she is indebted for her safety, and without which she neither could defend herself against a foreign enemy, nor survive intestine warfare. Thus the people of Ireland were plainly told what was to be the consequence of their refusing to surrender their independent Legislature. The House then were to put the two countries in this situation, the most perilous and frightful in which it is possible they could be placed! Such, however, must be the consequence of the House joining in the pledge of the right honourable gentleman.

It is curious to observe the arguments which the right honourable gentleman and his friends have on this occasion used in support of the measure they wish to carry into effect. One would be tempted to think, that the right honourable gentleman had formed

a coalition with the party he has long been accustomed to reprobate; a party which lately attempted to accomplish, by the force of arms, what is now endeavoured to be brought about by intrigue—I mean the United Irishmen, with whom the right honourable gentleman seems to be perfectly agreed in five or six of their leading principles. The United Irishmen wished to destroy the present Constitution of Ireland; this is also the object of the right honourable gentleman. The United Irishmen declared the Parliament of Ireland to be the cause of all the evils and of all the miseries with which that country had been afflicted. The right honourable gentleman has brought forward the same accusation against them. The United Irishmen charged the Legislature of their country with being the dupe of the English party: the right honourable gentleman, following their example on this point, also ascribes every misrule, every error of Government, all the distractions and all the misfortunes of Ireland, to the influence of a British faction over the Parliament of Ireland. It is not, indeed, to the faction which he heads there, he ascribes this influence, but he has asserted, that it was exerted by one, at the head of which the Duke of Portland stood, and of which his honourable friend (Mr. Windham) near him was a Member. He has told us, that that faction made a tool of the Irish Parliament to answer its own purposes; and the United Irishmen have repeatedly made the same assertion: thus they are agreed as to the evil. They are also agreed as to the remedy; for they both prescribe a Revolution—*Delenda est Carthago* is the maxim of both: the Irish Parliament, they agree, must be destroyed, and this is made the grand cure. The United Irishmen and the right honourable gentleman have proposed to apply their remedy, however, in somewhat a different manner. He would incorporate a few of the representatives of the people of Ireland in the British Parliament. With respect to the means by which these measures were to be carried into effect, they are also very much alike. The United Irishmen said, they knew better what was good for Ireland than all the rest of the people of Ireland did: the right honourable gentleman has said the same thing of himself: like him too, the United Irishmen did not scruple to make use of corruption to gain their object: they resorted to force and intimidation; the right honourable gentleman has done the same. The only difference between the two was, that the United Irishmen conceiving their Parliament to be the mere tools of England, were for deposing it, and setting up a Republican form of Government with foreign assistance; while the right honourable gentleman was for merging down the Irish representation into that of England: his plan, as well as theirs, proposes the extinguishing

the Parliament of Ireland, and the means he uses to insure himself success, are the same as those to which they resorted. The question, then, which we have now to consider is, whether a British Parliament will second the right honourable gentleman in his project, and sanction this similarity between him and the leaders of that Rebellion, which the House lately so much deplored.

It was once observed by an honourable friend of mine, in speaking of an honourable gentleman in this House, that he had a temper so pugnacious and so obstinate, that if he saw two persons fighting in the streets he would never think of separating them, but would rather insist that they should go on and fight it out. This was said by an amateur of the art of pugilism, at a time when that honourable science was held in greater repute than it is now. But with whatever truth it may have been said, I should hope that no Secretary at War would wish to see a legislative battle of the kind, with which we are now threatened, but that he would rather wish to separate the combatants when he should know that they were the Irish Parliament and the British Chancellor of the Exchequer. Let the battle, however, be fought when it may, it will not be uninteresting. Each party is well seconded. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has two allies—corruption and intimidation. The people of Ireland have two allies also—honour and resolution—honour to resist the corruption, and resolution to laugh at the intimidation of the right honourable gentleman.

We have been told, that the existence of Ireland depends upon this project being carried. This I certainly do deny. The proposition has not, and never can be made out; but it is a melancholy consideration that the right honourable gentleman should still obstinately persist in his scheme, after the solemn manner in which it has been rejected by the Parliament of Ireland, and after he knows in what detestation it has been held by the great majority of the people of that country. If the right honourable gentleman continue still in the same temper, and if this House adopt his plan, the people of Ireland may naturally be expected to resort, and they ought to resort to every method of precaution, calculated to defeat the right honourable gentleman's scheme, and to oppose the influence which he would exercise over them by the weight and example of the British Parliament.

Much has been said upon the corruption and misgovernment of the Irish Parliament; and it is not a little extraordinary that these imputations, so congenial to the sentiments of United Irishmen, should come from those mouths which not long since poured forth eulogiums on that very Parliament, which they now so grossly

libel. I am far from pretending that the Irish Parliament is free from all blame. I do not mean to say that it has never neglected its duty, nor over-stretched its power. I ascribe to it no infallibility: but when the right honourable gentleman has so lately pronounced that Parliament he now censures the Saviour of Ireland—when he has, through the medium of the Viceroy, congratulated them on the suppression of an insurrection, and on the defeat of an invading enemy, I may be allowed to state it as an argument against the right honourable gentleman, that, after giving the Parliament of Ireland credit for doing so much good to the country, he has no right, and indeed he cannot with consistency, charge them with corruption and misrule, and pretend that this new charge of his shews the necessity of the measure he wishes the House to agree to. I must say, however, that were I asked whether the Parliament of Ireland may not sometimes have fallen into errors; whether many of the evils which exist in the present situation of Ireland, and much of the distress of the people, might not have been remedied by them? these are propositions which I perhaps should not be inclined to deny; but I shall always contend, that a Union is not the cure for the evils that are complained of, and that a British Legislature can never correct the political defects, or remove the distresses of Ireland, so well and so effectually as its own Legislature. To maintain his position, the right honourable gentleman is condemned to shew that the state of Ireland would have this day been better than it now is, if a Union had taken place at a former period: he must prove to us, that the adoption of his measure would have prevented insurrection, silenced all discontents, united all the discordant interests, and conciliated all the exasperated feelings and irritable passions of the country; unless he do this, his case is not made out, and upon this ground I am willing to rest the merits of the discussion.

Doubtless there is much to be done in the way of reform and improvement in Ireland; but to do this it surely is not necessary to pull down the credit and authority of Parliament. I should not have expected this conduct from the right honourable gentleman, whom I have so often heard declaim against all hasty alterations in forms of Government, and that spirit of innovation which is proved to overthrow instead of propping and repairing ancient institutions: I should not have expected that he would be the first to lay violent hands upon the Irish Parliament. Bad as he has represented that Parliament, and however blameable it may have been, it has certainly recovered much of its credit and character by the noble stand

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it has made in the defence of the liberties and independence of the country.

The argument that the right honourable gentleman and his friend used when they asserted that a Union was indispensable to the continuation of the connection between the two countries, I cannot admit. I deny what has been so positively asserted, that we have no alternative but division and separation or Union. The real alternative is, that the Irish Government should no longer continue to be a corrupt English job. Is it meant to be asserted that there is some innate depravity in the Irish character which renders them unfit to have a Parliament of their own? No, the cause of the corruption which has been complained of is obvious. The Government of Ireland has been made a job of for the advantage of English Ministers; this is the corruption, this is the will that has pervaded it from first to last; but before Ireland be required to surrender her independence, let at least a trial be made of what can be done by an honest Irish Parliament; by a Parliament uninfluenced by a British Minister, by a Parliament having the interest and the happiness of Ireland for its object; and looking to Irish prosperity and Irish gratitude for its reward. Let it not be a Parliament looking to St. James's only, but one that shall have the advantage of the country constantly in view. Let this experiment at least be tried before the annihilation of the Irish Parliament be proposed. I am certain that nothing can be done in this way which would not tend to strengthen the bonds that unite the two countries: and I deny that we are driven to the alternatives stated by the right honourable gentleman. In the position in which the two countries are now imprudently placed, if there were a disposition to separation, that disposition must be greatly increased. The right honourable gentleman holds out that Ireland is helpless and dependent: he threatens the country with a measure it detests, and drives the people to take every precaution against the corruption and the intimidation with which he menaces them. The right honourable gentleman has displayed much eloquence in describing the political defects of the Government of Ireland, but he will not succeed in persuading the people that all the advantages he promises them from a Union cannot be as fully enjoyed under a Parliament in their own country. It seems to be a favourite maxim with the right honourable gentleman and his friends, that it is not possible there can be a good Government in Ireland. The absurdity of this assertion is too obvious to require any refutation. On a former occasion I observed that the character and habits of the people of Ireland were such as would render the removal of their Legislature fatal to their industry and ruinous to

the nation. Indeed it is my confirmed opinion that if ever there was a country in which a tangible, visible, and resident Government was necessary, that country is Ireland. The right honourable gentleman has told us, that Ireland will obtain great commercial advantages in consequence of a Union—Why not give Ireland these advantages without a Union? He has told us that the situation of the Catholics and the Dissenters will be improved; but he has not said why these ameliorations must not take place without a Union. If, indeed, Ireland is to be regarded as a conquered country, then there is an end to all arguments of this kind. If gentlemen proceed upon this principle, they should come boldly forward and state it.

I have already said so much on this subject that it is not necessary for me now to detain the House by any farther argument against the project of the right honourable gentleman; but I cannot help noticing a very singular answer which was given to one of the most important objections against a Union. It is generally admitted that the distress and poverty of the lower orders in Ireland is in a great measure owing to the number of absentees. This evil, it was observed, would be increased by a Union. A noble Lord has, however, asserted that a Union would not increase the number of absentees, but that, on the contrary, it would make them reside more on their estates than they now do. He contends that the importance of a seat in the Imperial Legislature will make the Irish landlords anxious to cultivate the affections of their tenants. This, instead of conciliating, seems rather calculated to insult the feelings of the people. They were to be told when the absentee came to canvas, that he was not now soliciting a seat in the puny and miserable House of Commons of their own country, but in the Imperial Legislature: this is, however, a very singular argument, since the object of it is to prove, that men become kinder landlords in proportion as their Legislative duty places them at a greater distance from their tenants; that they will be better neighbours, in consequence of only visiting their estates once in twelve months, and that they will all at once become humane, generous and benevolent, from the worst of motives. It is surely no great compliment to the gentlemen of Ireland, to state that they are only likely to do good from motives such as these. The noble Lord must certainly have a very high idea of the impression that will be made upon the Irish Members when they enter this Imperial House. He, perhaps, pictures to himself, the hundred Irish Knights struck dumb with astonishment and awe: he, doubtless, imagines that they will all possess the kind of diffidence which used to distinguish

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former Speakers of this House, who were always forced into the chair, until you, Sir, set another example. The noble Lord possibly expects that it will be necessary to order the Serjeant at Arms to force the Irish Members into the Imperial House, and that they will be confounded, that they will actually crawl in upon all fours; and all this the noble Lord tells us will make them kinder landlords and better neighbours. This sort of argument is not very well calculated to conciliate the good will of the Irish; it would rather irritate and provoke them; but it is needless to dwell longer on this, the Irish are not so dull and stupid a race as not to see its tendency, although it were not pointed out to them. I shall therefore take up the time of the House no longer, but proceed to make the motion of which I have given notice. I believe there are few that will not agree to the first part of the resolution. It contains a truism, which, if the right honourable gentleman had not already declared he would oppose, I should not have expected to have been objected to by any one, whether their sentiments be for or against the measure. The right honourable gentleman has observed that the resolution was unnecessary; I trust the House will be of a different opinion. The right honourable gentleman cannot but know, that it has always been the practice of Parliament, when they expected any infraction of the Constitution, to mark by a solemn resolution their disapprobation of the attempt, following up the resolution with a pledge, that if the attempt should be persisted in, punishment would be inflicted on those who should be found guilty.

Mr. Sheridan then moved the following resolution:—

“That no measures can have a tendency to improve and perpetuate the ties of amity and connection now existing between Great Britain and Ireland, which have not for their basis the manifest, fair, and free consent of the two countries.

“That whoever shall endeavour to obtain the appearance of such consent and approbation in either country, by employing the influence of Government, for the purposes of corruption and intimidation, is an enemy to His Majesty and the Constitution.”

Mr. Chancellor PITT said:—Sir, I was for some time in doubt whether it was necessary to say any thing in reply to what has fallen from the honourable gentleman. His only discussion has been upon general principles, and they are not now before the House. They have already been amply debated, and the House has decided upon them. If therefore they were now before us, I should not deem it necessary to say any thing to confirm the House in an opinion they have already expressed, and which stands re-

corded. Although I shall not reply to his general topics, yet I shall say a very few words to his particular motion; it stands divided into two parts: the first is, that no measure of Union should be pursued without the full, free, and unbiassed consent of the Parliament of both countries. This, Sir, as the honourable gentleman has himself stated, is a truism. It was not ever attacked, it cannot be controverted, and must immediately be assented to as soon as stated. But that argument which the honourable gentleman has adduced as decisive in favour of his motion, is a decisive argument against it. If a thing be true, there requires no declaration to give it effect, and all such attempts are useless and nugatory; but more particularly ought it to be an argument against it, when actual truth includes practical falsehood: upon this point it is not necessary that I should say more. The second part of the motion states, that whoever should, by corruption or intimidation, attempt to carry the question, is an enemy to his country. This unquestionably has a reference to what has passed upon former details: it goes the length to insinuate that such conduct has been pursued: it undoubtedly alludes to the case of a high officer in the sister kingdom, who has quitted his situation on account of his disagreement with his colleagues in an important fundamental measure of Government. If many gentlemen are connected together with the honourable fair intention of acting for the service of their country, it is necessary, in order to preserve a unity of action, that they should agree in their system; and it is an error to suppose that either the resignation, or even the dismissal, of any one, is a symptom of corruption. The honourable gentleman himself well knows the necessity of such a connection and similitude of sentiments, that there might be a harmony of conduct among the several Members of Administration. The honourable gentleman will not deny it in any place but this House; at any other place he will not maintain it with a gravity of face, though he does it here. If upon any occasion there chanced to exist any difference of opinion among the Members of the Government, it has always been seized upon with avidity, and quoted as a mark of the insincerity of Administration. I have heard it stated from the gentlemen on the other side, that permitting a Lord Lieutenant to dismiss all the servants of the Crown at his will, was fettering his hands in an unprecedented manner, and depriving him of his legal and constitutional authority. It is impossible, therefore, for the honourable gentleman to assert that doctrine, unless he means to apply it to the particular instances to which I have alluded; and if he does not mean to apply it to those instances, it is then open to the objections which applied against the first part

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of his motion. The instance which honourable gentlemen have particularly fixed their attention upon, is not one of any extraordinary nature; it results from the necessary consequences of an established system; it grows out of the very nature of all Governments, where there exists the necessity of all the Members acting together. The honourable gentleman steps forth as the defender of the independence of the Irish Parliament, and reprehends me, as having spoken in terms of disrespect of that body. He thinks it necessary to call in the aid of the British Parliament to step in and vindicate them; but upon the grounds which I have stated, as applying specifically to his motion, I shall move the order of the day.

Mr. GREY could not see why the right honourable gentleman should cavil so long upon the word truism, upon which, he asserted, that his honourable friend had grounded his resolutions. It was a truism, if he pleased so to call it, but it was one which contained a proposition that was truly stated, and which he felt to be a sufficient ground for his assenting to the first part of the resolutions, if not also to the second. The right honourable gentleman says, they are divided into two parts, and they are so—the one says, that no measure of force or intimidation should be used to bring about that which should be the result only of a fair and free consent of the Parliament of the two countries; this might appear a truism to the right honourable gentleman, but it contained sufficient motives to induce him to vote for it. He could see nothing but danger in the discussion of the question, particularly as it would affect the public mind in Ireland. The House, in his humble opinion, should have resisted it in the first stage; but above all they should not now leave it in the power of Ministers to bring forward the measure whenever they pleased, and thus hold out a prospect to Ireland that must keep that country in continual alarm, and in perpetual dread, that force, intimidation, or corruption, may continue to attempt the introduction of a measure which her Parliament has already decided against. Such must be the opinion created in the public mind of Ireland, not merely by the moving of such a measure, but the avowed resolution of the right honourable gentleman to persevere in it. It was therefore in order to do away that opinion, and to relieve Ireland from these vexing apprehensions, and to let the Irish Parliament know that the British House of Commons would entertain no idea of countenancing any measure that did not meet their fair and free consent and approbation.

Intimidation and corruption were at all times a crime; and, if he had grounds to suppose the right honourable gentleman had been

guilty of it in the present business (he confessed, however, he had none), he most certainly would impeach him. But, though he had no proof that could authorize him to institute such a charge, he could not, however, help saying, that his conduct during the present transaction rendered him very liable to that suspicion. The right honourable gentleman speaks of the difference of opinion which may arise on certain occasions between the Members of the Executive Government, on fundamental points of policy, which, if permitted to be persisted in, must arrest the progress of public business: but, undoubtedly, though that may be true as to the general concurrence of the Members of Administration on the general policy of public measures, yet it was a principle which by no means went to justify making the vote of a Member of Parliament on a particular question, a sufficient reason for his dismissal from office, while he agrees, perhaps, with his colleagues on all other points; that surely was not within the rule which the right honourable gentleman seemed to prescribe to himself. The case, adduced so triumphantly by the right honourable gentleman, was very different from that now in dispute. The Lord Lieutenant, whom he had alluded to, was to carry a system of Government wholly different from that which was pursued before his entrance into office—that Lord Lieutenant was instructed to carry certain measures, to which he knew that most of the Members of the then existing Administration in Ireland, were decidedly hostile—if therefore he made such arrangements as were necessary for the accomplishment of that general plan, he was justified in doing so, and his conduct on such an occasion would be widely different from that now pursued by the right honourable gentleman, who, according to his own principle, might be justified in removing a person high in office, who differed from his colleagues on some fundamental point, as in the case of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Ireland; for should it fairly authorize him to remove the Prime Serjeant, who administered an office that should stand aloof from the influence of Government, as all law offices should do, merely because he would not vote as the right honourable gentleman wished on the question of the Union? this surely was making Parliament the instrument of corruption. But the right honourable gentleman has said, that the dismissals complained of, arose solely from the fair, sincere and honourable intentions of Government, who for the security of the public good could not continue to act with those who differed from them on great and essential points of policy: was this the uniform and unvaried opinion which ruled the public conduct of that right honourable gentleman? If so, he would beg leave to ask, if there was not a time when a question as

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important as the Union with Ireland, and as essential in the then opinion of that right honourable gentleman, to the interests and well being of good Government, (he meant Parliamentary Reform) which that right honourable gentleman had brought forward, and which he pledged to exert all his influence as a Minister and Man, ultimately to bring into effect? As a man indeed he has done much for that measure; for he once supported it with an eloquence which no man could equal; but as a Minister, it is well known how he has since acted with respect to the same measure? Where then are his fair, sincere and honourable intentions? has he since manifested them in the removal of those who opposed that measure; or another measure, the slave trade, to the abolition of which he had so warmly professed himself to be a determined friend? by no means; they still continue in office, and may be reckoned among his most confidential friends—in vain did he exert all his eloquence to persuade them—they resolutely determined to differ from him on what he then asserted to be a fundamental point of policy—where then was the proof of that sincerity which now prompts him to dismiss those who will not agree with him on the present measure? Does not this suffice to shew that he cannot justify his former conduct by his present assertions, and that all must now agree with him on all occasions, or forfeit their places and his favour, while the right honourable gentleman attempts to style the discussion of the present great question, a free, fair, and unbiassed discussion?

Mr. JONES said he had rather have been advised by the abilities of others, than evinced his own want of them; but he felt himself called upon to do his duty. The question at present, as it struck him, and which called so loud for the interference of the House, was, whether or no three-fourths of the people of Ireland were to be cut out from the fair and equal benefits of the Constitution?

Here Mr. SPEAKER called the honourable gentleman to order. He told him he was not speaking to the question, but that in a future stage he would have an opportunity of expressing himself on the general view of the subject.

Mr. SHERIDAN rose to explain. He said, the House now knew the Irish House of Commons were adverse to the measure; but that the difficulty arising from that circumstance was not his whole inducement to opposing the measure. He said, if that had not been the case, his sentiments of it would have been the same. He had stated, that Ireland was in that situation, that it was incapable of giving its consent. He considered the majority of five on one side, or of five on the other, as of no importance to the question

His argument had taken a different ground. He had contended, that Ireland, with 40,000 men in the heart of her empire, relying upon this country for commercial advantages, and those threatened to be withdrawn, was not in a situation to give her free consent to a measure of this kind. The Parliament of Ireland had shewn their dissent to the system of an Union, and the people had manifested their indignation at it, in a manner which, from his knowledge of their dispositions, he had been led to expect; yet this had not, in the slightest degree, altered the principle on which he set out, namely, that under the present situation of affairs, the full and free concurrence of the Irish Parliament could not be obtained. The resolutions came to this, they stated a measure as necessary to the existence of the connection between the two countries; he had, therefore, a right to conclude he was sincere in his pledge, that he would exert his power, when a proper opportunity presented itself, of carrying that measure into effect. His motion had been stated to be a truism. Admitted: but was that to be considered an object? Would the right honourable gentleman say, that it was not true that the Parliament of Ireland could not give a free and fair consent, when he held out, that those who voted against the measure would be turned out of their places? Did the right honourable gentleman not know there were one hundred and sixteen placemen in the Irish House of Commons; and that having made two great examples, by dismissing the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Serjeant, the others would be sure to remain staunch and true out of fear? The right honourable gentleman had said, it was incumbent on the House to adopt the measure. He denied it; it was false: on the contrary, the House ought to trace out those who had advised His Majesty to it, and bring them to condign punishment. Let the people of Ireland, if a Union was desirable, know on what principle it was to be carried—not deceived by false appearances, not dazzled by the splendor of the Imperial Parliament. Let the Parliament of Great Britain present itself to the people of Ireland in their best and proudest attitude, and convince them they were above carrying the measure of a Union by corruption and intimidation. These would be the best steps to conciliate the people of Ireland—he expressed himself pleased that his honourable friend intended to vote with him. He should certainly divide the House. He said, he should have thought it his duty to have submitted his propositions, even if the measure had been altogether abandoned; for it was in the power of the British House of Commons to put the question in a very different situation. When the House had given the Minister the power of carrying the measure, they might be told,

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the next time they met, that the objection of the majority against it in the Irish House of Commons was obviated by his means of intimidation and corruption: he might be enabled, in the course of a fortnight, to tell the House he had a majority of five or six in the House of Commons of Ireland. He added, that if such a measure as this was carried by threats, this country would have ample cause to repent it. It would give a perpetual pretence to rebellion; and he therefore deprecated the idea of a Union on such terms.

Mr. GREY and Mr. JONES said each a few words in explanation; after which the House divided on Mr. Chancellor Pitt's motion—For the previous question, 141; Against it, 25.

Strangers were then excluded the gallery; and on their readmission,

The honourable ST. A. ST. JOHN was speaking against the question for the Speaker leaving the chair. He observed, that it had been admitted, he believed pretty generally, that the prosperity of Ireland had increased in the course of late years; that was to say, since the declaration of the independence of the Irish Parliament; and therefore it was fair for him to presume that something more ought to be adduced in support of the measure of a Union, than merely to alledge the necessity of it, or to say that it will conduce to the farther prosperity of that country.

The right honourable gentleman who came forward with his resolutions upon this subject, stated on a former occasion, that neither this nor the other country could be placed in such a condition, as the present crisis of affairs demanded, with the Union of both. That made it necessary to consider how far Legislative Union would bring to the common service of the empire a greater degree of force than it now possesses; many comparisons were made between the probable effect of this, and the certain effect of another Union—he meant the Union with Scotland; it was stated, that Union had produced mutual strength—this did not appear to him to be a conclusive reason; for it did not appear, nor had any body attempted to shew, that Scotland might not have improved if the Union had not taken place: and suppose a Legislative Union between this Country and Ireland had taken place, and the state of the prosperity of Ireland had been the same as it is at this moment, it would then be just as fair to say, that such state of prosperity was owing to the Union, as now to say, the Union produced all the prosperity now felt in Scotland, or to say, that the Union now proposed will have that effect. But he was not called upon to discuss this point; the view which he wished to take of the question was simply this: Whether, in the present

situation of affairs, the House of Commons in Ireland having declared its sense against considering the measure at all, any good could result from the agitation of it at this moment in the Parliament of England? Whether, supposing that the Union was, in itself, of the greatest of all possible advantages to Ireland, it could produce any good to agitate the question now? In his opinion, as the Irish House of Commons had expressed an opinion unfavourable to the measure, it was unwise to enter at this time upon the discussion in this country. He was of opinion it would irritate the House of Commons of Ireland, for it was not likely to have any other effect upon that House than that of irritating them, to find, that although they had expressly decided against it, yet the Parliament of this country were proceeding without any regard to their determination, or as if no such determination had taken place. This might induce them to adopt some measure to manifest their resentment at such a conduct as this. Was it not therefore a matter to be wished, that a measure, which, instead of uniting, tended to disunite the two countries, should be avoided? Was it not better to let the whole question rest for the present calmly, and the parties left to cool upon the subject, and brought forward hereafter, if it should appear to be necessary, at a season adapted for that purpose?

The right honourable gentleman had stated grounds why he wished the House to adopt this measure. He stated several grounds. He took up the ground of objections to the measure, and proceeded to answer those objections. The first was, to the competency of the Irish Parliament; the second was, the supposed attack which this measure made upon the honour of that Parliament; the third was, to the effect it was alledged to be likely to produce on that country with regard to absentees. Of the first it was needless for him to say any thing now in answer to the observations of the right honourable gentleman: he had maintained the competency of the Irish House of Commons, and they had decided against it. The second was purely a question of feeling, and, as such, more likely to irritate the people of Ireland than any other question at the present moment; and as the House of Commons there had decided against it, the discussion of it here was peculiarly improper, for, in their present state of mind, it was likely to drive them to take some step that might be hostile to reconciliation. This was, in his opinion, a point to be much attended to in the present critical condition of the whole empire. We were told there was no Statesman in Europe, nor any Minister among our Allies, who would not regard this Union as a proof of the consolidation of the strength of the British empire; and we were told that the Allies of the French Republic would also feel

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the force of this Union. Granting those arguments to be found in the view of a Union, what would they lead to, if the measure was attempted, but failed in the progress of it? When it appeared that one branch of the Parliament of one of the two countries had expressly and distinctly negatived even the consideration of it, he would ask what conclusion was likely to be drawn, as well by our own Allies as by the Allies of the French Republic?—Nothing, surely, but that the attempt had weakened, instead of strengthening the British empire.

But it was said that the bad state of Ireland required this measure, as a remedy to its evils. He admitted, that, indeed, there were evils existing in Ireland, but he was not yet convinced that some other remedy might not be devised for those evils. He had heard there were religious and other feuds in Ireland; but before this measure was carried, it was necessary, in his opinion, to shew that there was no other remedy for the evil. It had been stated, that the Roman Catholics in Ireland, possibly if the Union took place, might have some liberties which they do not at present enjoy. It was therefore cautiously thrown out, and accompanied by some hints, that it is to be a thing that may at some distance of time happen; it was stated rather as a thing in prospect, than a thing now to be adopted. This was only exasperating the Irish Catholics; for by telling them that a favour may or may not be granted to them in the event of Union, they would regard it rather as a lure to induce them to assent to the Union, than as any serious intention to relieve them, and therefore they were likely the more to oppose the measure on account of that sort of half promise of relief.

Much had been said with regard to the danger of innovation. When Parliamentary Reform had been talked of, its opponents had always discovered that the time was improper for it. If any time was ever improper for such a measure, the present time was highly improper for the present measure. Besides, if this plan of altering the representation of the people was to take place in Ireland, upon what principle was it to be contended that a Reform was not applicable to the Parliament of England? It was impossible to say that the one must be reformed, and the other must not be reformed, with any degree of consistency. The argument, in point of season, was equally applicable to both, whatever might be the comparative merits of the representation of the two countries. If it was said that the people of Ireland were not duly represented, he was ready to assent to that assertion. He was ready to say, that instead of the people being duly represented there, only the corrupt wishes of a party were represented there; but the argument upon the question of time was

now stronger than it ever was. He therefore called on all those who had always found the time improper for innovation, now to oppose this measure; for if any time was improper, this was certainly so; and some gentlemen had held the danger of innovation to be so great, that it were better for all the corruptions of a State to be allowed to remain, than that they should be made subject to any plan of general Reform, and on that account had always regarded those who called for Reform as little better than abettors of our enemies. All such persons ought most strenuously to oppose the measure now before them; for, indeed, it was a dangerous measure, if any innovation could be deemed so, and might possibly produce, instead of preventing, rebellion in that country. He was not in the habit of bestowing praise upon the House of Commons of Ireland, but he would say what he thought of them: he was of opinion that that House of Commons, by the steps they had lately taken upon this measure, had shewn themselves much more worthy of being called the Representatives of the People of Ireland, than he thought they were. They had spoken their sentiments boldly, and had plainly shewn that they are not to be dictated to by Government. That, in point of principle, was in itself good, be the determination upon the measure wise or otherwise. Having said this, he would frankly own that the question itself was doubtful to him at present. His opinion upon the Union was not yet very distinctly formed: it was not necessary for the present purpose that it should be distinctly formed upon that question; it was sufficient for this case, that the agitation of the point was, at this time, highly dangerous. If Ireland had agreed to the discussion of the subject, he should then have been called upon to deliver his opinion upon the measure; but here they had negatived even the idea of discussion; and that being the case, he foresaw danger in persisting any farther now. Upon these grounds he found it to be his duty to oppose the motion that the Speaker do now leave the chair.

Mr. GREY said—Having heard what was stated by my honourable friends in the course of their arguments on this and a former night, upon the subject before you, without having heard any answer to any one of their arguments, I confess it was my wish to hear some arguments in favour of this proceeding, rather than deliver any of my own against it; a proceeding in itself, as well as in the season in which it is proposed, the most extraordinary which any British Parliament was ever called upon to investigate. I say, I should have wished rather to hear some arguments in favour of the measure, than deliver any of my own upon it, that I might, perhaps, the better be able to form a judgement upon its merits

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than I at present profess to be. We are now called upon, under circumstances the most extraordinary, to agitate a question the most momentous that ever came before any Parliament, either in point of constitutional right or public policy. I say we are called upon to discuss a bargain which we have not the power to conclude, and on the merits of which, one of the parties, whose consent is absolutely necessary to give it effect, has declared distinctly they will not listen to the very preliminary of the proposal; but to which, upon the instant they object, as containing a principle which is inconsistent with their most sacred rights, at variance with the very essence of that system of Government, under which, they say, they have already thriven. Under such circumstances, I was in hopes the right honourable gentleman would have spared a debate, which in its best effect can be but useless; but which may become the most calamitous by inflaming discontents, and increasing jealousies, which have already produced but too much evil. It is under such circumstances that I come forward to join my voice to those who have already, but in vain, deprecated the right honourable gentleman's unseasonable and ill-advised determination to press forward a measure which the very first principle of all policy, namely, the tranquillity of a great part of the empire, should have induced him at all events to have suspended at least. I am the more entitled to say this, because that right honourable gentleman himself has always shewn such readiness to question the conduct of others upon any measure that had any tendency to oppose his wishes. A little reflection upon that point ought to have induced the right honourable gentleman to abandon this measure for the present at least.

We have a sincere desire to carry into effect one part of the message from His Majesty—we all profess, as the right honourable gentleman would say, to be friendly to a system that tends to consolidate the two kingdoms; and I will add, that to which, I suppose, he has no objection, to any thing that is consistent with the security of our Constitution—But I will say, that although every true Irishman, every true Englishman must be a friend to any such measure, and must hope that it will be adopted; and if I may, without egotism, say so, I will add, that not only from my feelings for the British empire at large, but also from local circumstances, much of my happiness depends upon preserving inviolate a cordiality between the two countries, a cordiality which, in my conscience, I believe to be such, that nothing but such a measure as this can possibly destroy, or possibly endanger; yet I would have it understood, that the very discussion of such a measure as this is highly dangerous. What I most heartily wish for is, a Union between the two countries; by

a Union I mean something more than a mere word—a Union not of Parliaments, but of hearts, affections, and interests—an Union of vigour, of ardour, of zeal for the general welfare of the British empire. It is this species of Union, and this only, that can tend to increase the real strength of the empire, and give it security against any danger. But if any measure with the name of Union only be proposed, and the tendency of which would be to disunite us, to create disaffection, and distrust and jealousy, it can only tend to weaken the whole of the British empire. Of this nature do I take the present measure to be. I say discontent, distrust, jealousy, suspicion, are the visible fruits of it in Ireland already; if you persist in it, resentment will follow; and even although you might be able, which I doubt, to obtain a seeming consent of the Parliament of Ireland to the measure, yet the people of that country would wait for an opportunity of recovering their rights, which they will say were taken from them by force. Let us here apply this principle to the case now before us, and let us not be misled by mere words, and by the skill of the right honourable gentleman in putting them together, and by his telling us it is necessary. The right honourable gentleman has asserted that this measure is absolutely necessary, and well adapted for the safety of Ireland under its present circumstances. This is an assertion which, I think, he has failed to prove. Great evils undoubtedly exist in Ireland—but, do they owe their origin to the Legislature of Ireland? Or are they likely to be removed by this proposed Union? These are the two questions on which I will own the right honourable gentleman has fairly put the matter, and on which depend the whole merits of the measure before us, and in that light do I mean to argue it.—To begin then; I would ask, are the evils of which the right honourable gentleman complains as existing in Ireland, and which call for remedy, arising from the circumstance of Ireland possessing a separate Legislature? That Ireland has an independent Legislature, is true. That with that Legislature great calamities have happened in Ireland, is also true; but I know that the right honourable gentleman is much too good a reasoner, that because these two things are co-existent, that therefore the one of them must be considered as the cause, and the other the effect; they may possibly have reference to, or dependance on one another. The right honourable gentleman has stated, that we, on this side the House, have seldom expressed much friendship for the Parliament of Ireland, and that it is a little odd that we should discover so much propriety in their determination now. I shall endeavour to discharge myself from any imputation upon that particular. When I have said in this House

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that the Parliament of Ireland was governed by corruption—when I have said, and others have said with me, that there was so much corruption in the Parliament of Ireland, that Peerages were granted to men who possessed Boroughs, the Members for which voted for Government—when we alledged these things, and what was a great deal more serious than alledging, offered to prove them at your bar, should the House give us leave to institute the inquiry; and when we found that, by the advice of the right honourable gentleman, this House refused to enter upon that inquiry, we protested against his advice, although the House adopted it—but I think it is a little singular that he who accuses others of the trick of changing their sentiments for the purposes of the moment, should on the sudden himself turn round and change the whole of his tone upon this same subject; that he whose supposed influence is said to have directed the majority of that Legislature, but who certainly never did use any influence with that Legislature, but who happened to concur with him, should now suddenly turn round, and not only speak with contempt of them, but also appear to be angry with any person who can possibly see any virtue in any one of their efforts, is certainly matter of astonishment even to those who are most accustomed to sudden changes of political opinions. But how does the right honourable gentleman prove both the corruption of the Irish Parliament as a general proposition; and yet their pure virtue, in every measure in which they have supported him, is a point which I must leave to the superior talents of that right honourable gentleman to explain. I say, that before he proves the Parliament of Ireland, although they have virtuously supported all his measures for years together, are yet in their very nature so corrupt as to be incapable of amendment, he has made out no case that entitles him to a hearing. I say, however, that although the conduct of the Parliament is censurable in many respects, we must look to other causes than that of the independence of their Legislature for the causes of the evils which the Irish people feel. It has been owing to the conduct of Government, and for which I say the right honourable gentleman is responsible, unless he can shew me that all the measures of Ireland were forced upon him by the sturdy disposition of the Irish Parliament, which he had no means of preventing, and which nothing can prevent but a Union. Nothing short of proof to this effect can justify the measure which is now before us. But is it true that any of the evils of which the people of Ireland complain, have originated from the obstinacy of their Parliament? Have they not rather originated from the obstinacy of Government; from the obstinacy and crooked system of the right honourable gentleman

himself, and, indeed, of too many of his predecessors? Look at the History of Ireland, and, I say, you will find, that if it had not been for the interference of the British Councils, and of British intrigue, none, or, at least, but few of the evils which are now so much felt there, would ever have taken place—evils of which Government is the parent, and yet which are now made the reason for taking away all the semblance of liberty among the Irish people. There are feuds and religious animosities, and heats and dissensions, now in Ireland, and they distract that country. Who has excited them? Who has created these feuds and religious animosities? Who has created these dissensions? Who has endeavoured to set up one party in that country against another, and which has brought it into such a state of distraction? Government has caused all these evils, and Government is now making use of all these evils as a pretext for taking away the liberty of the people of Ireland. They have raised hopes, they have disappointed these hopes—they have excited alarms—they have created discontents—they have fostered animosities—all these things produce mischief, and that mischief is then given as the reason for taking away all the liberty of the people.

Is this the fault of the people themselves? Are they unfit for any trust or confidence? Did they abuse it when it was reposed in them? Look at their conduct in 1782. Look at the behaviour of the Volunteers that met at Dungannon—Did they behave with any turbulence or riot? Did they not, on the contrary, enter into a resolution expressive of their attachment, not merely to the independence which they themselves were allowed to enjoy, but also of general toleration to all those who differed from them in opinion? [Here he read an extract of a resolution to that effect at the meeting at Dungannon.] These, said he, were the genuine feelings of men who were declared independent, and always will be, when they are left to themselves. But this good and happy temper has been spoiled—other feelings have been artfully excited in that country. But, perhaps, the right honourable gentleman means to say, that all the contentment that was expressed time after time in Ireland, was only from a feeling that prevailed in consequence of the relaxation of some rigour which till then a certain class of the people felt: that all they did was only approving that relaxation. I say, the system which they at that time had in view was much more comprehensive. But to come to a time more recent—to the year 1794. Lord Fitzwilliam went to Ireland, not instructed indeed, that is a phrase to which the right honourable gentleman would object—but certainly authorised to grant emancipation to the Catholics. How was

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that received? By a disunion among the Protestants? No! with cheerfulness. But there was then in Ireland a small party, considerable neither in talents nor consequence of any worthy kind, to whom the right honourable gentleman listened: the system was altered—the gleam of hope held out to the Catholics was destroyed. Lord Fitzwilliam, who was authorized to hold it out, and had taken delight in a task so agreeable to his feelings, was suddenly recalled. From that moment every thing became gloomy. Disappointment begot discontent—discontent, aversion—aversion, hatred—all this afterwards broke out in those acts of violence which occasioned what the right honourable gentleman, the other night, was pleased to call a lamentable but necessary severity. I say, I was sorry to hear the right honourable gentleman justify the acts of severity which have been used in that country—I say, that nothing can render torture necessary in the present state of civilization in Europe. Will the right honourable gentleman, or will any man, justify the practice of torture for the purpose of gaining political information? Nor has any thing which the right honourable gentleman has said about connection with the enemy justified a practice so abhorrent to humanity.

Having said this, I am now led to take a short view of the final adjustment of 1782; and here the right honourable gentleman plays off the trick of a debater upon us, instead of arguing the matter fairly. He says there could be no final settlement or adjustment at this time because it was even then expressed that something was left to be done. But he knows well enough, and he ought to have the candour to acknowledge, that there may be a final adjustment, and yet something be left to be done; that is, that there may be a final adjustment of one thing, and another be left to be settled, and which indeed was the case. The final adjustment referred to the political independence of the Irish Legislature; but the point to be settled was one that related to trade. Before that adjustment, I will say that I think no country was less indebted to another, itself a friend, than Ireland was to Great Britain. The repeal of the sixth of George the First was the first measure of liberality from this country towards Ireland. After this, a plan was adopted and a bill brought in by my right honourable friend, (Mr. Fox), and that was considered as all that was necessary upon the subject; and Mr. Grattan, after the declaration of the independence of the Irish Parliament, observed, very properly in the Irish House of Commons, that this was all they wanted from Great Britain upon the Constitutional point—that having done away the obnoxious act of Parliament which stood in the way of their independence, they would not

receive any thing more upon the Constitutional Rights of the Irish People from the Parliament of England, for that they were themselves competent to the management of their own Rights. After this, a decision took place in one of our Courts of Law which excited the jealousy of the People of Ireland, and Mr. Grenville came over by command of the Lord Lieutenant to make a complaint, and to state that to preserve harmony between the two countries, the claims set up in consequence of that decision of the Court of Law should be abandoned; it was abandoned accordingly; and for the purpose of clearing up all doubts upon it, Mr. Townshend, now Lord Sydney, a particular friend of the right honourable gentleman, moved for leave to bring in a bill for removing all doubts which have arisen, or which may arise, concerning decisions, &c. and for quieting all disputes between the two countries. This was when the right honourable gentleman was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Then we come to what the right honourable gentleman calls a more authentic record of the debates of Parliament than are usually given to the public under that title; and here it appears that the gentleman who is at the head of the Opposition in Ireland to the Union (Mr. Foster), is introduced by the right honourable gentleman; a gentleman whom we are said, on this side of the House, to be disposed to treat with more respect than formerly—more respect! an invidious expression, by which the right honourable gentleman would insinuate that he is entitled to treat him with less respect. I confess I have not forgotten the share which that gentleman has had in supporting the measures of the Minister of this country in Ireland, nor have I changed my opinion of their destructive tendency. I think of them now as I have always thought of them, that many of them are most unjust and odious; yet when I see a man, in direct opposition to what may be called his own personal interest, do that which appears to be right; when I see him oppose the measures of the right honourable gentleman with whom he has acted so long, and that not upon any doubt that the power of the right honourable gentleman is declining; but when it is as high as ever, and when I reflect that, from his knowledge of the temper of the right honourable gentleman, he must be aware of the effect of differing from him; I say, when I see all this, I own I am induced to treat a man who thus shews an independent spirit, I am induced to treat him with *more* respect than I did formerly; and I think his conduct entitles him to the esteem and gratitude of his country. The right honourable gentleman has been pleased to quote some passages from the speech of that gentleman upon the debates upon the Irish propositions.—[Here Mr. Grey read the extract formerly taken by

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the Minister out of Mr. Foster's speech.]—This the right honourable gentleman quotes to prove there was at that time no such thing in contemplation as a final adjustment. Now, having read this part, I will refer to another from the same authority, to shew that the adjustment was entire with regard to the constitutional point, and that all that remained to be adjusted between the two countries related to points of commerce.—[Here he read part of the speech of Mr. Foster, in which that gentleman said, upon the Irish propositions, he could not remain silent when he heard any thing said that was unworthy of the independence of the Irish Parliament, and that he should be unworthy of the name of an Irishman, if for all the commerce in the world he could assent to part from an atom of their Constitution. He had said that—"If Liberty was the price of Commerce, take back your Commerce."]—But the right honourable gentleman may say that the Liberties of Ireland will be as safe under the joint English and Irish Parliament, as under the Irish Parliament only; to which I answer, that Mr. Foster, whose opinion the right honourable gentleman is so fond of quoting, is of another opinion, for he says "he will stand or fall by the independence of the Irish Constitution." I state all these things as the opinions of Mr. Foster, whose opinion the right honourable gentleman has been so fond of quoting. But what is the opinion of Mr. Foster to me? he may change his opinion; and if I was to argue upon the change of opinion, the history of the right honourable gentleman himself would furnish debates for this House for the remainder of our lives. Let us turn to other persons—Mr. Foster, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Prime Serjeant, have all lost their places for changing opinions, or rather for retaining them when the right honourable gentleman differed from them. These places will be filled up, I dare say, by men of abilities and integrity, but I must observe that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland was a great enemy to the Irish propositions. Here I take my information from the same authentic account which the right honourable gentleman has made evidence upon the subject.—[Here he read part of the speech of Mr. Corry on the Irish propositions, which that gentleman violently opposed, and insisted on the independence of the Irish Parliament.]—I have given you the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland; I will now quote the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of England.—[Here he read part of the speech of Mr. Pitt on the 4th resolution of the Irish propositions, ending with an expression that he had rather abandon the proposition than excite any alarm about the revival of any claim of superiority of this country over the Parliament

of Ireland.]—All this I state merely to shew that the arrangements between this country and Ireland were final with regard to all constitutional points.

The next point to which I am led in the consideration of this subject is the objection which the right honourable gentleman stated to two independent Parliaments; to shew the inconvenience of it he quotes the case of the Regency. What was the case of the Regency? The Parliament of Ireland vested in the heir apparent the full power of a Regent without any restriction. The Parliament of this country voted the same person, but with certain limitations and restrictions. But were the situation of the two countries alike?—By no means. In this country there is a vast deal of power and influence which attaches to the sovereignty independent of that which is properly to be called Government: in Ireland there is none. When therefore they voted a Regent, they had nothing but the power of Government to give. The case was otherwise in this country, and therefore the one having given the whole without restraint, and the other restraining, did not in reality differ, as might have been thought upon the first view of the matter. But the right honourable gentleman says that the principle is the whole thing to be considered; that they might as well have differed on the person as the power of the Regent:—To which I answer, that this is an extreme case; and that for all the usual and common purposes of Government, there is not the least probability of any material difference arising between the two Legislatures upon any practical measure; and so deeply do we find this idea impressed upon the Parliament of Ireland, that we find Mr. Grattan advising the House of Commons in Ireland to assent to some measures upon the war, on account of the danger which might result to the empire if the two Parliaments should differ upon that important measure.

[Here Mr. Grey took notice of the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the subject of Parliamentary Reform, and observed that, although he had of late years opposed every thing that had any tendency to that effect, and branded every species of innovation with every epithet of reproach, he himself was at the same time the greatest innovator in this country.]

Having said thus much, said Mr. Grey, I have only to repeat that the evils under which Ireland labours have not their root in the Parliament of Ireland; that the remedy which the right honourable gentleman proposes will not meet the evil, nor be any remedy for it; that the agitation of the question cannot by possibility be of any service to the empire. All the utility of the publication of the resolutions and the speech of the right honourable gen-

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tleman is in its progress already, and cannot be aided by any vote of this House, for the measure then will be of no more authority than it is now, without the concurrence of the Parliament of Ireland. Now is there no danger on the other side? I say the dangers of producing distraction in Ireland by this discussion are so great, that there can be no excuse for bringing this matter forward for discussion now. The wit of man cannot devise any good which this discussion can produce, and the mischief may be incalculable. I did not hear the first speech of the right honourable gentleman upon this measure. I have heard it was as eloquent as any that ever fell from the lips of man; but what has been the effect of it in Ireland, where, I understand, a report of it is circulated with great eagerness? It has tended to inflame the Parliament there instead of reconciling them. They have agreed to have a call of the House for the purpose to be all on the watch against the farther progress of this measure. I say then you will only increase the mischief if you proceed in this business.

Mr. Grey concluded with some general observations upon the situation of affairs on the Continent, in the course of which, he observed, that although the right honourable gentleman was not an enemy to any proposition for any negotiation for peace, yet he was ready to confess, in the present situation of Europe, there was no hope of it. He was, however, for renewing all endeavours to negotiate for it whenever there was a prospect of obtaining it on honourable terms, but of which he saw no prospect while the French followed their present principles of aggrandizement. All that we could do was to unite all our affections and force together; not a union in words but a union of hearts; but this Union would, instead of being any strength, be the cause of weakness to the empire.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS spoke as follows:—Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the arguments so strenuously advanced on the other side of the House, I have no hesitation, Sir, in declaring, that I rise with a considerable degree of satisfaction to refute the objections urged against the Union with Ireland. Having followed the last honourable gentleman (Mr. Grey) with the greatest attention, I flatter myself, that, from my knowledge of the subject, I am fully able to convince the House, that the reasons urged against the measure are totally groundless. The last honourable Speaker has dwelt with much minuteness on the discussions of the year 1782, and on the commercial and political situation in which Ireland was then placed, and has since continued, in consequence of those discussions; but I beg leave to observe, that every deduction from those circumstances, and every grant made to Ireland at that period, have

nothing to do with the question now before the House. The present proposition contains in it no suggestion derogatory to the acknowledged independence of the Irish Parliament. It is a proposition for the incorporation of the two Legislatures into one, without infringing on the liberty or independence of either.

In addressing itself to the judgement and decision of the Irish Parliament, this country explicitly acknowledges its independence; and to put an end to all cavil on that part of the argument, I am ready to admit, that by the transactions of 1782, the Irish Parliament is placed on the same footing of independence, in relation to Great Britain, as Scotland was with regard to England before the Union of the two kingdoms; and certainly I have never heard that the proposal made in 1707 for the Union of England and Scotland has, at any period, been treated by the most captious opponents of the measure, as an attack on the independence of the Parliament of Scotland.

With regard to the measure itself, so far from operating injuriously on Ireland, I can prove, before I sit down, by a reference to the affairs of Scotland, at and after the Union, that a similar measure would be attended with similar benefits to Ireland, by improving and increasing the political and commercial advantages of the latter country in the same proportion as those of the former have been improved and increased; and that the latter country would experience an equal increase of commercial and political advantages.

I had entertained an opinion, that the question would have been argued in a different stage of the business, and that there would not arise any debate on leaving the Chair. Had the motion for the Committee been allowed to pass, Sir, both sides of the House would have had better opportunities of understanding each other by mutual explanation. That mode, however, meeting with opposition, I and my friends are reduced to the necessity of debating the measure on the particular point of your leaving the Chair. The discussion of the grand question, in this stage, is so far an inconvenience to me, as it leaves me less leisure to arrange and methodise the various statements I have collected on the subject. I am, however, ready to meet the opponents of the measure in any way they please, convinced that I am armed with such authorities, and such arguments, as will overturn every objection that can be offered. Since the Union was first in contemplation, I have endeavoured to make myself as conversant with the subject as possible, by every research of history, and by a very careful examination of the documents on which were grounded the articles of the Union with Scotland.

For this research I claim no particular praise, it being my duty, as well as that of every other Member of Parliament, to acquire as accurate a knowledge as possible of the subject under discussion.

In vindication of myself and friends, I have no hesitation in saying, that the affairs of Ireland demand at this period particular circumspection. I will assume, as a proposition, which I believe no man will have the boldness to deny, that there does exist at this time in Ireland a spirit of clamour and dissention, of treachery and treason, which menaces the overthrow of the present Government. Conspiracies are so widely extended, their influence is so deeply infused into the minds of the people of Ireland, and the connection between the two countries is thereby so much endangered, that without the active and immediate interference of the Government, the result, in the opinion of the most intelligent men, might have been a total separation of Ireland from this kingdom. Viewing Ireland in this perilous situation, it was the duty of His Majesty's servants to extricate her from the intrigues of the common enemy, by preserving and improving the connection which has so long and so happily subsisted between that country and Great Britain.

Now the question is, Whether or not the political diseases alluded to were not likely to be removed by incorporating the two Parliaments into one?

In the observations which naturally arise from the subject, I beg leave to assure the House, that I mean nothing disrespectful to the Parliament or People of Ireland, when I affirm, that the evil machinations of the enemies of both countries have been too successful in most instances, and that the check or control of the English Government is absolutely necessary for the salvation of Ireland. In my animadversions, I am not about to throw out any reflections injurious to the gentlemen who constitute the Legislature of the sister kingdom; and I hope I shall not be accused of illiberal motives when I give it as my opinion, that a very great part of the people have been corrupted by the new doctrines, so dangerous to the existence of all regular Governments, consequently so dangerous to that of the empire. Every good man, who had seen or heard of the influence of those destructive doctrines on the Continent, would wish well on the present occasion to the active exertions of the Government of Great Britain, endeavouring to preserve the liberty, the independence, and the happiness of Ireland. The picture which I draw of Ireland is of a gloomy and lamentable aspect; but in proportion as it is so, it becomes the duty of every well-wisher to both countries to devise some remedy by which he

may destroy the hopes of the enemy, and give new life and vigour to the sister kingdom.

If any political maxim can be held more generally true than another, it is, that in order to regulate well the affairs of any nation, it is necessary that there should subsist a mutual confidence between the governors and the governed. But it is a melancholy truth, that there does not exist in the great body of the people of Ireland, that confidence in the Parliament of Ireland which is essential to its utility. I need not go far to search for the reasons of this essential defect. It grew out of the frame and constitution of the Parliament of Ireland.

If the whole power of the country were vested in one-fourth of the people, and that fourth was separated from the other three-fourths by religious distinctions, heightened and envenomed by ancient and hereditary animosities, it was impossible that there could exist a mutual confidence between them. This, however, was certainly the situation of the Parliament and People of Ireland. If there were such dissensions and animosities in Ireland, the interference of a British Parliament was admirably calculated to restore peace and confidence, by granting to the people of Ireland a free participation of all the privileges enjoyed by their fellow subjects of Great Britain.

It is impossible to imagine a remedy more appropriate to the radical cause of the disease which poisons the peace and happiness of Ireland, than the measure of an incorporating Union of the Legislatures of the two kingdoms. The Protestants would, of course, lay aside their jealousies and distrust, being certain that against any attempt to endanger the Protestant establishment in Ireland, the whole strength of the united Parliament must be exerted; and, on the other hand, every Catholic who is a friend to the connection with Great Britain, but is desirous to obtain every indulgence, and be admitted into a participation of every privilege and benefit consistent with that connection, would be confident that their cause would be candidly and impartially considered by a united Parliament, the great body of which would be relieved from those apprehensions, jealousies, and inveterate animosities, interwoven into the frame and constitution of the separate parliament of Ireland.

When gentlemen talk so much of the Parliament of Ireland, and insist that a consent to the present measure would totally destroy the liberty and independence of the Irish Parliament, I am certain they bewilder themselves in a misunderstanding of the terms which they use. How could it have that effect? Would not there be, by the incorporated Parliaments, the three estates of King,

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Lords, and Commons? And if there be a sufficiency of the aristocracy, and a sufficiency of the democracy of the different countries, how would either the independence of the Parliament, or the liberty of the people of Ireland, suffer? I have no hesitation, Sir, in maintaining, that an incorporated Parliament, partly English, partly Scotch, and partly Irish, is much better culculated for the management of the affairs of the British empire, than separate Parliaments in England, Scotland, and Ireland. The powers of a Parliament, so constituted, would be more extensive and effectual than when acting separately in different places. It ought also to be recollected, that with all the boasted independence of the Parliament of Ireland, it could not give vigour or effect to its acts, till approved by the third estate, whose residence was in England. The controlling power was properly vested in the Sovereign of this country, who was also the Sovereign of Scotland and Ireland. Then the Parliament of Ireland is not entirely independent. And if it be true, that the Parliament of Ireland, as now constituted, be dependent on the third estate of this country, it is evident that the Parliament of Ireland is not that independent state which this argument seems always to take for granted.

The more this part of the argument is probed, the more fallacious the reasoning of its authors will appear. One of the most valuable privileges which the British Parliament enjoys, is, the right it claims to watch over and control the conduct of the Executive Government, even in the exercise of those powers which are justly considered as the clearest and most undoubted prerogatives of the Crown. There is not one of those prerogatives in the exercise of which the servants of the King are not responsible, and to the control of which, in that shape, the power of Parliament does not extend; and that power is bounded only by its own wisdom and discretion. The Parliament of Ireland, in its separate state, is debarred from this important privilege, which it would obtain by an incorporation with the Parliament of Great Britain. This observation is the more striking, when it is considered that this power of the British Parliament extends, in the manner I have stated, to the control of the Third Estate of the Irish Parliament, even in its legislative capacity, and that exclusively of the other branches of the Irish Legislature. It is impossible candidly and dispassionately to examine those considerations, and not feel how extensively the character and importance of the Irish Parliament would be exalted by the Union of the two Legislatures.

In support of these propositions, if they are disputed, I refer to the authority of Mr. Grattan, the champion of Irish independence,

who says, "the Parliament of Ireland cannot act independently; for in all questions of peace or war, it must implicitly follow the Parliament of Great Britain." If the Parliament of Ireland were as independent as its advocates now insist, why should it be obliged to adopt the measures of the Parliament of Great Britain, on all occasions of peace or war? The incorporated Parliament of Ireland would have all the privileges of the incorporated Parliament of Scotland. To corroborate these facts, Sir, I, as one of the forty-five Scotch Members, can, in the face of the five hundred and thirteen English Members, freely discuss and watch the interests of Scotland. The Parliament, thus constituted by the Union, had not deprived Scotland of any of the privileges enjoyed previously to its incorporation with England. The Union had increased the privilege of the Scottish Members; for, instead of confining their deliberations to the affairs of Scotland, they were empowered to take part in discussions respecting the affairs, not only of England, but of the whole British empire; and so far as regarded the Third Estate, had even an interference in the affairs of Ireland.

If the Parliament of Scotland, Sir, thus incorporated, has all the rights now described, the Parliament of Ireland, incorporated on similar principles, would have the same privileges. The deliberations of the Parliament of Ireland, thus constituted, would also operate successfully in all questions respecting the affairs, not only of Ireland, Scotland, and England, but of the whole British dominions. It would enlarge its powers, and give greater vigour and effect to its operations. But now the Parliament of Ireland has no right to discuss questions in which Great Britain only is interested. It is a misstatement of terms to talk of destroying the Parliament of Ireland, for the Union would place the Irish Members in the same situation as the Members of the Parliament of Great Britain.—I condemn, Sir, the operations of personal vanity, which, in this instance at least, run riot against the principles of common sense. I wish gentlemen would direct their pride and honour to acts of laudable ambition—I wish they would evince greater patriotism, by a due attention to the interests of both countries. If considerations of personal vanity and self independence are to be allowed to operate on this subject, let gentlemen recollect, that if their genius be ever so acute, their talents ever so transcendent, their eloquence ever so splendid, all these wonderful powers are confined to one little island. All their genius is limited to their own internal regulations, and reduced to their own small territory. Independence and liberty are fine sounding words; but can it be seriously maintained, that for the preservation of these, it is necessary to have

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a separate and local Legislature? The soil and spot where the Parliament sat do not constitute its value, but its adaptation to preserve the general interests of the community at large. This is the only true and valuable object of independence. I address myself therefore to the true pride of Ireland, which ought not to be biassed by false principles of honour. A mind thus actuated is governed by a childish, not a manly ambition. Let, however, the Irish Parliament accept of a participation of all the rights of the Parliament of Great Britain, and they would find, that their eloquence would not be confined to England, or to any other country, but their voices would extend to every corner of the world. They would be heard, not only in Europe, but in Asia, Africa, and America. The Parliament of Ireland would then become Members of the British Parliament, which had enabled this proud country to exalt its head amidst the wreck of surrounding nations; had given it energy and vigour to resist the pernicious doctrines of the French Republic; and held us up as a monument of admiration and envy to the remotest corners of the world. They would then be the advocates, not only of Ireland and Great Britain, but advocates for the rights and liberties of the human race.

A Parliament thus constituted would be worthy of true ambition. It would be a more respectable body than what had been described by a gentleman, who, in talking of the limitations of the Parliament of Ireland, compared it to a Great Vestry or Parish Meeting. I wish, Sir, to give efficacy to the Parliament of Ireland—to bring it from that narrow and confined situation, to act in a more enlarged sphere—to explore new sources of true greatness—to participate and enjoy all the benefits and advantages of the Parliament of Great Britain. Whether, therefore, I consider the state of the Irish Parliament in its collective or individual capacity, I am equally decided it will gain extensively by the success of the present measure.

An objection has been taken that we ought not to have proceeded on the business in this country till the propositions had been made to us by the Parliament and People of Ireland. I confess I do not understand the objection. In the progress of this important business, it was intended to follow, step by step, the manner of recommending and adopting the Union between Scotland and England. When the Queen of England sent a message to the Parliament of England on the subject of the Union, Her Majesty sent also a similar message to the Parliament of Scotland. But we have many records, by which we may direct our proceedings. The measure of a Union with Scotland had been so often in contempla-

tion, that the general plan required little amendment. It had been proposed in the days of James the First, in those of Charles the First, in those of the Usurper Cromwell, afterwards by William, and lastly by Anne. It never was offered in the one Parliament, without at the same time recommending it to the other.

In considering the question of an incorporating Union of the two Legislatures of Great Britain and Ireland, it is impossible, in every view of the subject, not to turn one's eyes to the state of Scotland before and since the Union, and to contemplate the advantages which have resulted from it to that part of the united kingdom. This part of the subject would lead into such a length of detail, it is impossible to pursue it fully, without wearing out the attention and patience of the House. I must, therefore, content myself with referring to a few general heads, which will strike more forcibly by putting them in a comparative view of what they were at the Union, and what they are now:—

COMPARATIVE VIEW.

Shipping in 1692	-	8,618 tons, value	-	£. 25,854
Ditto - in 1792	-	162,274 tons, value	£.	1,298,192
Leith - - in 1692	-	1,702 tons		
Ditto - in 1792	-	18,468 tons		
Scotch Linen 1700		1,000,000 yards for sale		
Ditto - in 1796		23,102,404		
Customs at the Union		£. 34,000		
Ditto - in 1798		284,577		
Excise at the Union	-	33,500		
Ditto - in 1798		851,775		
Population in 1755		1,265,000		
Ditto - in 1795		1,534,000		
Glasgow population	}			
from 1701 to 1710		14,790		
Ditto - in 1798	-	77,042		

From this statement the happy effects of the Union are evident. I wish particularly to impress upon the minds of those who oppose the measure, the wonderful increase of the Scots Linen Trade. This I am the more eager to notice, as the Linen is the present staple manufacture of Ireland; and a celebrated character in that country has thought himself warranted to descend so far as to endeavour to create an alarm on that subject. At the time of the Union, that trade in Scotland amounted to about one million yards; but by the fostering care of the United Parliaments, and from a benign consoli-

dation of the interests of both kingdoms, it had increased to the quantity of twenty-three millions, manufactured in the year 1796.

These improvements and increase of trade were not confined to any particular part of Scotland. They were experienced in every corner of it; and there is not now an inhabitant of any spot in all Scotland who has not cause to rejoice at the event.

Many melancholy pictures, in the shape of prophecies, were presented to the public view on that memorable occasion. Among other false prophecies, permit me to make a few remarks on that celebrated speech of Lord Belhaven:

‘I think I see,’ exclaimed his Lordship, ‘a national church voluntarily descending upon an equal level with Jews, Papists,’ &c. Now to prove his Lordship a false prophet in this, I not only think I see, but I actually do see, that very National Church, founded upon a firm foundation, at the distance of ninety years from the passing of the Act of Union; and that very National Church so firmly secured in all her privileges, that it is very likely she will continue to possess them, unimpaired, for ever! In truth, her simplicity and her poverty will remain to her an impregnable security against the plunder and rapine of all ruffian hands!

‘I think I see,’ continues his Lordship, ‘the noble and honourable Peerage of Scotland, now divested of their followers and vassalages, and put even on an equal footing with their own very vassals.’ If the Union has had a tendency to break asunder the bands of feudal vassalage, which prevailed to too great an excess in that country, wise and virtuous men will not be disposed to consider this as one of the evil consequences to be lamented in the formation of a Legislative Union of the two kingdoms. As to the Peerage of Scotland, considered as a body in the State, it may be true they suffered some transitory mortifications in consequence of the Union; but I believe there is no candid or good man in that whole respectable body who would wish to change their present situation for all the pomp and poverty they enjoyed previous to the Union.

‘I think I see,’ adds his Lordship, ‘the Royal State of Boroughs walking their desolate streets,’ &c. On the contrary, I see that the Boroughs, instead of being desolated, are most of them ten times improved in population, in industry, and in wealth! To prove this, it is only necessary to mention the names of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aderdeen, Perth, Montrose, Dundee; and, in short, every other town of any name or consequence in that part of the united kingdom.

‘I think I see our learned Judges,’ continues Lord Belhaven, ‘laying aside their practices and decisions, studying the common

'law of England,' &c. Now I see no such violation or alteration of the municipal law of Scotland, which is as purely administered now as it was before the Union took place. But although the Scotch Judges do not study the common law of England, by way of introducing it into their courts, I certainly must do my Lord Belhaven the justice to acknowledge, that at all times the northern part of the island has produced some of the brightest luminaries of the law of England, who never would have emblazoned Westminster-hall with their transcendant talents, had not the Union taken place between England and Scotland.

'I think I see,' adds his Lordship, 'the valiant and gallant soldiery of Scotland, all their old corps broke up, the common soldiers left to beg, and the youngest English corps kept standing.' Now I do see, that the natives of Scotland, both in the army and the navy, from the common soldier, and the man before the mast, to the General in the field, and the Admiral on the ocean, instead of being worse treated than the English, are put upon the most equitable footing with the soldiers and the sailors of this part of the united kingdom, according to their respective merits! I do see nothing but the most liberal rewards and provisions made for the Scottish, as well as the English hero; both of whom have consolidated their strength, by a politic and glorious Union, for the general benefit of every part of the British empire!

'I think I see,' continues this noble false prophet, 'the honest industrious tradesman drinking water in place of ale; eating his saltless pottage, and petitioning in vain for encouragement to his manufactories!'—The increase of excise, in Scotland, since the time of the Union, is certainly no proof that this part of the prophecy has been fulfilled; or that water has become the beverage of the people of Scotland. But I need not enlarge on this topic. The reverse of the prophecy is notoriously the truth, in every respect.

'I think I see the laborious ploughman,' adds this visionary, 'with his corn spoiling upon his hands, for want of sale, cursing the day of his birth,' &c.—Now I do see, on the contrary, the mere ploughman enjoying treble wages, and treble comforts; while his master, the farmer, instead of his corn spoiling upon his hands, for want of sale, reaps such profits from its immediate sale, as enables him to live almost upon an equal footing, in point of every social enjoyment, with even the hereditary landed gentleman, the possessor of the soil itself!

'I think I see,' continues his Lordship, 'the pretty daughters of our landed gentlemen, petitioning for want of husbands, and

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‘their sons for want of employment.’—Now I do see, and I believe every one in this House sees, that the pretty daughters of the Scotch nobility and gentry, so far from petitioning for husbands, bear, at the present moment, a very high premium in the hymeneal market of the English aristocracy!

I need not enlarge on a topic which is proved to every man's observation, by the examples daily passing before them. In truth, nothing, has tended more to accelerate the happy connection which now subsists between the two parts of the island, than the intercourse of friendship, habits, and affection, arising from the union of the beauty, wealth, and talents, produced by the intermarriage of the inhabitants of the opposite sides of the Tweed. And as to their sons petitioning for want of employment, let me do justice to this liberal nation by declaring, that we need only look into every profession in life, from the Scotch gardener, baker, and hair-dresser; up to the Scotch merchant, the Scotch physician, the Scotch general, the Scotch admiral, and the Scotch lawyer; to prove, that, since the Union, merit has been equally rewarded throughout the whole island, whether its possessor was rocked in his cradle on the south, or on the north side of the Tweed!

The noble Lord concludes this prophetic reverie, with an allusion to the death of Julius Cæsar, which he compares to the murder of *Mother Caledonia*, by her own sons in the Scottish Parliament. The comparison is so wild and inapt in all its parts, that it would be a waste of time to pursue it. If the Scotch Parliament had been such a tyrant as the comparison would suppose, there was real patriotism in her instant annihilation. But in justice to the memory of my ancestors, I disclaim any such charge, as imputable to the ancient Scottish Legislature. Whoever will take the trouble of perusing the acts and regulations of the Scotch Parliament, will find a fund of much wisdom and good policy to admire. But the Union of the two kingdoms is ill understood, and ill defended, by those who conceive that it proceeded either from want of wisdom, or want of virtue in the Scotch Parliament: it proceeded from a principle of rendering the exertions of its Members more extensively useful, by enlarging its functions; and making them, as they now are, sharers in the deliberations of that Legislature, which is the only truly exalted Assembly, for the rational and practical freedom, for the security and the felicity of man, on the whole surface of the habitable globe!

Considering these historical facts, the people of Scotland sacrificed much more than what is now required from Ireland; and I believe the honourable gentleman (Mr. Grey) will admit, that the

people of *his* northern neighbourhood had also experienced the happy effects of the Union. It was certainly within his recollection, as faithfully recorded in history, that the two nations had thought it necessary to suffer a vast waste of territory, near the river which separated England from Scotland, to serve as a boundary; and that all this desert, antiently a *land of neutrality*, was immediately cultivated and adorned, and, besides its excellent agricultural qualities, had produced men of talents, capable of taking a distinguished part in the debates of the British Parliament, and capable also of defending the liberties and privileges of *Northumberland*!—By the Union with Scotland, and the cultivation of this waste land, England got also the co-operation of a race of gallant men, who aided her in the most perilous situations, and were frequently the foremost to fight her battles!

Against all the prophecies of Lord Belhaven, and the other opposers of the Union, I will take the liberty of bringing under the recollection of the House a passage in a letter from Queen Anne to the Scottish Parliament, recommending to them to take the articles which had been agreed upon at London under their consideration: it was in these words:—

‘ The Union has been long desired by both nations, and we shall
 ‘ esteem it as the greatest glory of our reign to have it now per-
 ‘ fected, being fully persuaded that it must prove the greatest hap-
 ‘ piness of our people. An entire and perfect Union will be the
 ‘ solid foundation of lasting peace; it will secure your religion,
 ‘ liberty, and property, remove the animosities among yourselves,
 ‘ and the jealousies and differences betwixt our two kingdoms; it
 ‘ must increase your strength, riches, and trade, and by this Union,
 ‘ the whole island being joined in affection, and free from all ap-
 ‘ prehensions of different interests, will be enabled to resist all its
 ‘ enemies, support its interest everywhere, and maintain the liberties
 ‘ of Europe.’

From this remarkable passage it was evident, that Her Majesty was a true Prophetess, for not one syllable of her predictions has failed.

It has been asked, what right have we to impute all those advantages to the Union of the two kingdoms, and why it is not to be supposed that Scotland, like other nations, would have advanced in prosperity from the various causes which have contributed to the modern wealth of other states?

There are a multitude of answers that might be given to this question; founded on the local situation of Scotland, her internal policy, and her relation to other nations, which must for ever have

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debarred that kingdom, in a separate state, from participating in that prosperity which has marked the progress of other states in Europe. But in place of consuming the time of the House by reasoning, to which it may justly be imputed that it is influenced by events that have since occurred, I think I shall give them more satisfaction by using the words of a contemporary Statesman, who shews himself a master of the subject, who was one of the Commissioners for treating with England for an Union, and who, upon the first article being brought under the consideration of the Scotch Parliament, gave his sentiments in the following words :

‘ My Lord, this article is the foundation of the whole treaty, and the approving or rejecting of it must determine Union, or no Union, betwixt both kingdoms.

‘ How far the approving this article conduces to our happiness appears evidently, by considering the three different ways proposed for retrieving the languishing condition of this nation ; which are, that we continue under the same Sovereign with England, with limitations on his prerogative, as King of Scotland ; that the two kingdoms be incorporated into one, or that they be entirely separated.

‘ That the Union of Crowns, with limitations on the successor, is not sufficient to rectify the bad state of this nation, appears from these positions, founded on reason and experience.

‘ Two kingdoms, subject to one Sovereign, having different interests, the nearer these are one to another, the greater jealousy and emulation will be betwixt them.

‘ Every Monarch, having two or more kingdoms, will be obliged to prefer the council and interest of the stronger to that of the weaker, and the greater disparity of power and riches there is betwixt these kingdoms, the greater influence the more powerful nation will have on the Sovereign. Notwithstanding these positions, I shall suppose the Parliament of Scotland is vested with the power of making peace and war, of rewarding and punishing persons of all ranks, of levying troops, and of the negative itself.

‘ I could shew the inconveniences that must attend such a state of government, in disposal of places, and managing public affairs. I could likewise shew the improbability of attaining such conditions, or in keeping them if attained. But laying aside such considerations, my humble opinion is, that we cannot reap any benefit from these conditions of government, without the assistance of England, and the people thereof will never be convinced, to promote the interest of Scotland, till both kingdoms are incorporated

' into one ; so that, I conceive, such a state of limitations to be no
' better for Scotland than if it were entirely separated from Eng-
' land ; in which state, there is little appearance of procuring any
' remedy to our present circumstances ; which appears from these
' uncontroverted positions :

' The people and government of Scotland must be richer or
' poorer, as they have plenty or scarcity of money, the common
' measure of trade.

' No money or things of value can be purchased in the course of
' commerce, but where there is a force to protect it.

' This nation is behind all other nations of Europe, for many
' years, with respect to the effects of an extended trade.

' This nation being poor, and without force to protect its com-
' merce, cannot reap great advantages by it, till it partake of the
' trade and protection of some powerful neighbour nation, that can
' communicate both these.

' To illustrate this last position, I shall give a short view of the
' state of commerce we must needs be in with respect to our neigh-
' bour nations, supposing an entire separation from England.

' The ordinary mean whereby we can flourish in wealth, is that
' balance which arises from the exchange of our natural or artificial
' product with other places ; but we have no valuable branch of ex-
' port which does not interfere with the like commodity, in some
' more powerful neighbour nation, whose interest it is to suppress or
' discourage our commodity, for raising the value of its own ; so
' that there is no demonstrable security for the vent and encourage-
' ment of any branch of our export.

' Can it be expected that Holland will suffer us to improve our
' fishery, which is to them a nursery for seamen, a livelihood to many
' families, and an immense treasure to the public ?

' If we traffic with England, our linen cloth, cattle, and coals,
' will be discouraged, at least after the same manner that we discour-
' age export from thence. If we traffic with Muscovy, Sweden,
' Denmark, Poland, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy,
' the sale of our commodities will be of small value in those places,
' seeing the Dutch or English, by their increase of trade, are capa-
' ble to serve them with most of the like goods, cheaper and better
' than we.

' Let us look to any other part of the world for vent to our pro-
' duct, and we will find other nations have prevented us.

' If we attempt the East-India trade, that is already enhanced
' by the Dutch, English, French, Spaniards, or Portuguese, from
' whom we must expect opposition ; they themselves opposing one

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‘another daily, and we of no force to debate the same with the most
‘inconsiderable of them.

‘The trade of Africa is for the most part of small value, and
‘every province of America is claimed as property by some power-
‘ful European nation.

‘If it be said, that Scotland may make alliance with one of its
‘neighbour nations for protection; that alliance must be with Hol-
‘land, England, or France: other countries being so remote, or
‘poor, that their friendships can be of little use to us.

‘With Holland we can have no advantageous alliance, because
‘its chief branch of trade is the same with ours; with the English
‘we can expect no profitable friendship, for they being our near
‘neighbours will be jealous of our increase in power; and from
‘France few advantages can be reaped till the old offensive and de-
‘fensive league be revived betwixt France and Scotland, which
‘would give umbrage to the English, and occasion a war betwixt
‘them and us. And allowing the Scots, in such a juncture, with
‘the assistance of France, to conquer England, Scotland, by that
‘conquest, could not hope to better its present state; for it is more
‘than probable, the conqueror would make his residence in Eng-
‘land, as formerly the northern people used to do in their southern
‘expeditions.

‘From these considerations, I conceive, that this nation, by an
‘entire separation from England, cannot extend its trade, so as to
‘raise its power in proportion to other trafficking nations in Europe:
‘but that hereby we may be in danger of returning to that Gothic
‘Constitution of Government, wherein our forefathers were, which
‘was frequently attended with feuds, murders, depredations, and
‘rebellions.

‘My Lord, I am sorry, that in place of things, we amuse our-
‘selves with words: for my part, I comprehend no durable Union
‘betwixt Scotland and England but that expressed in this article by
‘one kingdom; that is to say, one people, one civil government,
‘and one interest.

‘It is true the words Fœderal Union are become very fashiona-
‘ble, and may be handsomely fitted to delude unthinking people;
‘but if any Member of this House will give himself the trouble to
‘examine what conditions or articles are understood by these words,
‘and reduce them into any kind of fœderal compact, whereby dis-
‘tinct nations have been united, I will presume to say, these will
‘be found impracticable, or of very little use to us.

‘But to put that matter in a clear light, these queries ought to
‘be duly examined, whether a fœderal union be practicable betwixt

‘two nations accustomed to a monarchical government? Whether there can be any sure guaranty projected, for the observance of the articles of a foederal compact stipulated betwixt two nations, whereof the one is much superior to the other in riches, numbers of people, and an extended commerce? Whether the advantages of foederal union do balance its disadvantages? Whether the English will accept a foederal union, supposing it to be for the true interest of both nations? Whether any foederal compact between Scotland and England is sufficient to secure the peace of this island, to fortify it against the intrigues and invasions of its foreign enemies? And whether England, in prudence, ought to communicate its trade and protection to this nation, till both kingdoms are incorporated into one?’

Thus spoke Mr. Seton, of Pitmedden, at the time when he had no resources, from which to draw his conclusions, but those of his own enlightened understanding, and the view he could take of the existing state of the other nations of the world. But his reasoning was solid, and I would injure it by adding more to the particular points he has so ably treated of. I shall, however, add one fact, which, in my conception, proves, beyond a doubt, that the rapid progress of prosperity in Scotland arose from the Union of the two kingdoms. Where did the prosperity of Scotland make its first appearance, and its most early progress? It was in the western parts of the kingdom, owing clearly to the circumstance of those ports being locally best situated to take the benefit of the colonial trade, then opened to the enterprize of Scotland.

A question has been triumphantly asked by an honourable gentleman? ‘Why not give all those advantages to Ireland without a Union?’ The best way I can answer this, is, by another question—If Great Britain should communicate these indulgencies or opportunities to Ireland, could she, under her present Constitution or Government, take the advantage of them? I am convinced she could not, and that in her present situation such concessions would not be productive of advantage. Without an incorporated Union, they would be of no avail; for the strength and resources of both countries must be consolidated, in order to enable Ireland to reap the full advantage from such concessions.

It is from the confidence in the strength of Government, that a communication of capital and other advantages can alone arise. And this consideration recalls to my mind a proceeding, which took place before the Union with Scotland, which put the interests of that kingdom and Ireland in a sort of issue. It happened early in the reign of Charles II. From the period of the crowns of both

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kingdoms being united in the person of James I. Scotland enjoyed several important commercial advantages derived from England, until the reign of Charles II. when they were done away by the provisions of the Navigation Act: the Scots remonstrated against what they called an injustice, and Commissioners were appointed to take cognizance of the matter. In the course of these proceedings, the Scots, as already stated, loudly complained that they were treated with less indulgence than the Irish.

This complaint was answered by the English Commissioners as follows:—

‘ And whereas your lop’ps (lordships) doe in severall places give hints at Ireland, and seeme to make it a ground why this and other privileges should be granted to Scotland, because granted to Ireland, the answere is most cleare and obvious, (viz.) that Ireland is not onely under one king with us as Scotland, but belongs to, and is an appendix of the crown of England, and laws made in the Parliament of England doe bind them; and no law can be enacted by the Parliament of Ireland, but what passeth the Privy Councell of England, and orders of the Councell of England, and the Greate Seale of England, doe take place in Ireland; yea, the treasurer and other great officers of State in England, have jurisdiction and superintendency in Ireland; by all which it is absolutely in our power, when we grant privileges to them, to compell and keepe them up to the restrictions of them; all which is quite otherwise in relation to Scotland.’

These were assigned as reasons to the Scotch Commissioners, why Ireland, in its then existing connection with England, was considered as entitled to a degree of indulgence superior to that allowed to their nation; matters are now totally reversed, and in the present very much altered state of the relation between Great Britain and Ireland, a similar answer may be given to the question, “Why not give these advantages to Ireland without a Union?”

In addition to this it might be observed, that the English Government, consistent with the duty they owe to their British fellow-subjects, could not make such concessions to Ireland under its present Constitution and separate Legislature; so that the very circumstance of Ireland enjoying what is called an Independent Legislature is the means of depriving her of a participation in those commercial benefits. Concessions of such a nature, I contend, cannot be safely granted until the superintendence of an Imperial Parliament possesses the control over the resources of the empire at large, and the power of applying them to Imperial purposes. Indeed, the answer of the English Commissioners, as I have just recited, is one of the

best that can be given to the repeated question I have already mentioned.

With respect, Sir, to the fate of the propositions in 1785, so much spoken of, the commercial benefits then tendered to Ireland were rejected on the same mistaken grounds that the House of Commons set their face against the present measure—They thought that the fourth proposition encroached upon their independence, and in consequence refused great commercial advantages. This consideration, I think, brings the question between the two countries to a fair issue. Is Ireland to be considered in a better situation with her present separate Legislature, and deprived of these manifold commercial advantages; or with her Legislature incorporated with that of Great Britain, with the full enjoyment of all those commercial benefits, and the various other advantages in a view of power, consequence, and respectability, as must result to Ireland, when thoroughly united with Great Britain? This is the true question to be considered by the Irish: for my part, I have not a doubt upon the point—the latter situation would be decidedly to the advantage of Ireland.

Great stress, Sir, has also been laid, by an honourable gentleman on the settlement in 1782, which has been called a Final Adjustment. I shall not cavil about words, but I contend that much of the argument founded upon that proceeding, as used by the honourable gentleman, was thrown away, as inapplicable to the present question. Indeed, I might call it on his part as fighting with a shadow. The question at issue, Sir, I must again repeat it, is between the benefits and advantages, take them all in all, derivable to Ireland from her present separate Legislature, or those from an incorporated Union; and I must again protest against the idea, that any thing in the present proceedings is any ways hostile or derogatory to the acknowledged independence of Ireland. The very mode of putting the present question to their Parliament, implies its Legislative Independence.

Much, if not the chief stress of the arguments urged by those who oppose this measure, has been laid on the opposition which has been made to it in the Parliament of Ireland. But when circumstances are attended to, I cannot refrain from stating, that this view of the subject is given in very erroneous colours. Two estates of the Parliament of Ireland, the King and the Lords, have pointedly expressed their desire that the subject should be entertained and considered; and the contrary opinion has been carried only by a very narrow majority in the House of Commons. Under such circumstances, it is idle to talk of this as a solemn decision of Parliament.

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But if it had been entitled to that appellation, it would not have altered my opinion as to the propriety of this House considering the question, and taking the most effectual means of bringing it again and again under the consideration of the Irish nation. Sound reason and good sense will ultimately prevail; and I cannot help auguring well to the ultimate success of the measure, as essential to the happiness of Ireland, when I contemplate the clamour and violence by which the consideration of it has been resisted. These are not the weapons by which truth and solid reasoning maintain their empire over the hearts and understandings of men. Cool consideration, and sober reasoning, are the arms by which the cause of truth is supported, and I have not a doubt that these weapons, properly used, will ultimately succeed against all the clamour and prejudice that can be adduced against them.

I believe there is no candid and rational man who is at present disposed to dispute, that a system of excise is the least expensive and most effectual mode by which a great revenue can be collected in any country. But it is in the memory of living men, and within the reading of us all, with what obloquy the first authors of that great system were loaded on its first introduction. But the solid understanding of mankind at last prevailed.

In this, as in almost every other part of this subject, I must refer the recollection of the House to what passed in Scotland on occasion of the Union of that kingdom with England.

When gentlemen pretended to think lightly of the Sacrifices of Scotland compared with those of Ireland, let them recollect, that Ireland had not for many centuries been free or independent of England, but that Scotland *never* was completely subdued or under the control of England; that Scotland gave up, what Ireland *cannot* give up, an independent Parliament of King, Lords, and Commons; and that Scotland gave up, what Ireland *cannot* give up, an *independent and separate CROWN!*

The Scots undoubtedly surrendered these honours at the time with reluctance, and evinced the greatest hostility to the Union, until experience had made her acquainted with its blessings. I cannot, Sir, help noticing the vast unpopularity of the Duke of Queensberry and other Commissioners in favour of the Union, while the zeal and activity of the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Belhaven were the theme of every tongue. The Duke of Queensberry, the nobleman who took the most active part in carrying the measure into effect, and was Her Majesty's Commissioner for the purpose, narrowly escaped, in several instances, with his life. The Duke of Hamilton, the patriot of that day, the most violent opposer of the

measure, was applauded to the skies for his conduct by the populace—they regularly chaired him from his apartments in Holyrood House to the Parliament House, just as the Dublin mob lately did the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, exclaiming, in their mad career: “God bless your Grace!” But those who had been so much reviled, and had so nobly withstood the storms and tempests of the times, had the consolation to live and witness the popularity of that measure for which they were condemned. The Union soon became so popular, that the Pretender, having pledged himself to a repeal of the Act of Union, excited such a fermentation against him, that he was obliged to expunge this promise from his manifesto!

This change of sentiment happened in the year 1715, eight years after the Union; and it ought to afford a salutary lesson to those false patriots who chuse to rest their characters and fame on the short-lived clamours of the day; and it ought to afford a heartfelt consolation to those who have the magnanimity to disdain such mean and paltry arts; trusting that their real patriotism, founded on a consideration of the true interests of their country, will not fail ultimately to secure to them that solid and permanent fame which is alone worthy of possessing.

Another argument, Sir, I wish to submit to your consideration in favour of the Union. If it be true, as insisted upon by Mr. O'Connor, in his evidence, that the people of England, according to their present form of Government, have no cause of complaint, when compared with the state and sufferings of the people of Ireland, then it consequently follows, that a Union between the two nations, founded on principles of common freedom, and common interest, will at once remove every cause of grievance on the part of the people of Ireland. By the participation of the freedom of Britons, by the full enjoyment of all the privileges attached to a member of such an honourable community, the Government of this country endeavours to destroy the hopes of the enemy, and to strengthen and consolidate the interests of the empire. If it be true, as generally acknowledged, that the poor of Ireland experience all the miseries concomitant to a state of want and wretchedness, then it follows, that their participation of the privileges of Britons, will rouse and animate to laudable exertions that useful description of our fellow subjects in the sister kingdom. That liberty which awakened the commercial enterprise of Scotland—that liberty which expanded its genius in the most honourable pursuits—that liberty which confirmed every sentiment which can dignify human nature, will, Sir,

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I am sure, have the same happy influence on the people of Ireland, connected with us by the dearest reciprocal obligations.

There are certain gentlemen, who had the hardihood to maintain, that the advocates for an Union were enemies to the peace of Ireland; but sure I am, Sir, that no arguments can be more futile or absurd. The introduction of that freedom into the various classes of Ireland, which was the admiration, and seemed the panegyric of all Europe, was no indication of the hostility of the Government of Great Britain: it would be a partnership, which would diffuse and extend its political and commercial advantages to the remotest corners of the globe—it would soon dissipate all idle and illiberal jealousies—it would allay the apprehensions of the real friends of both countries; and, by an equality of rights, infuse into the imperial spirit that noble emulation of mind which is the source of every excellence.

There are no sinister arts, as some malignantly insinuate, adopted for the attainment of the grand object of our discussion. There are no measures of compulsion, as the enemies of the measure affirm, in the contemplation of those in power. I wish, Sir, to convince, not to intimidate, the people of Ireland. The system of terror, so often enforced by the common enemy, thank God, is no part of the policy of the British Government. Adopting expedients of lenity and persuasion, we address ourselves to the liberality and wisdom of the Irish nation. They know the sincerity of our friendship; they know also the bitter malignity of that foreign power, which, like the rattlesnake, first endeavours to charm and then destroy. But, Sir, I thought that the eyes of every British subject were at last opened to the treachery of the common enemy of mankind; and sorry am I to find, that the very enemy now so generally execrated, compliments the people of Ireland, by alledging, that there is a spirit of credulity in the Irish system, which will admit of the grossest deception from those who have sworn to overthrow any government founded in justice and humanity.

With regard to the final adjustment of the year 1782, it was a misapplication of terms to call it final. It was also to little purpose to recur to the opinion of Mr. Grattan, or the sentiments he expressed on the subject of that arrangement, and the debates that preceded it. Mr. Grattan, on that occasion, was known to have been only the mouth-piece of the Volunteers. The whole of the business was evidently done in a hurry, and could only be considered as a temporary expedient to serve the purposes and exigencies of the moment, not as a matter to which stability or permanency was likely to be attached. However that might be, the Parliament of Ireland

had afterwards succeeded in obtaining every thing it desired ; and he was so far from denying a particle of its independence, that he admitted it in its fullest extent, and even founded upon it no small part of his present arguments. Sir, had the adjustment in 1782 not taken place, the situation in which Ireland would then stand might have afforded an argument against the present measure, because then the Sister Parliament could not, in strictness, be said to treat fairly ; but its independence, at the present time, gave it the same competency to treat that was possessed by the Parliament of Great Britain.

If, however, upon reflection, the Irish Legislature should not be convinced of the utility and necessity of the projected Union, there was an end of the plan, and it must retain that degree of independence which it preferred to the numerous and important advantages which were held out to it. The division in Ireland, I admit, was hitherto so apparently hostile to the proposal, that it was nearly decided that it should not be even entertained or discussed. But gentlemen seemed to insinuate an apprehension, that it was to be intimidated and bullied into it. The Administration of this Country, in the most full and unqualified manner, disclaimed the idea of any such intentions. Whatever might be the general opinion, or the prejudice against it, now in the heat and violence of the moment, arising from national pride, and a variety of other motives, I make no doubt but, were the measure adopted, in less than eight years that country, like Scotland, would be fully reconciled and convinced of its utility.

Among other arguments against the Legislative Union, was an appeal to the national pride of Ireland. By those strenuous opponents of the measure, it was alledged, that the Parliament and People of Ireland would be degraded. Here again I must refer, Sir, to those stubborn facts recorded in the page of history. By a happy combination of wisdom and humanity, the Heptarchy was overturned, and an empire established on principles of sound policy. The Prince who accomplished this grand object certainly merits the highest encomium for the operations of justice and humanity. But I wish, Sir, to put it to the conscience and feelings of those conversant with history, if they think that the various interests were injured or degraded by the appellation or privileges of Englishmen ? The people of the Seven United States or Nations were neither debased nor enslaved by the consolidation of their interests under one imperial management or direction. The Welchman, a brave and generous character, neither feels himself enslaved nor degraded by a consolidation of interest and freedom ; and sure I am, Sir, that

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the Scotchman is actuated by too noble and generous principles to entertain for a moment such an opinion. From these facts, I hope, therefore, I may assume, as a natural conclusion, that as former parts of the empire found neither injury nor inconvenience in a Union, that Ireland, as soon as prejudice and passion have subsided, will be equally harmonious to the happiness of the community. Such a state of Union would appear invincible to the common enemy, who, in the career of his conquests, not only robs individuals of their property, but perverts and destroys the salutary institutions of the nation with which he pretends to fraternise. A national mind, united according to the principles now recommended, and a public force thus concentrated, would be capable of repelling the attacks of the most formidable enemy, however strongly impelled by the new doctrines, and however animated by the fertile genius of innovation.

I have already had occasion to advert, in one point of view, to the argument, that we should proceed no farther in the business after the House of Commons of Ireland had expressed its repugnance to it in so unequivocal a manner. I have only farther to say, that no decision of that House shall deter me, and the Government of Great Britain, from telling and explaining to the People and Parliament of Ireland, in as much detail as possible, what the proposals were which we were desirous to submit to their cool and dispassionate consideration. The Irish House of Commons has expressed what they think of a Union: and it is our business to tell what we think of it also: for this reason it is, that I strenuously contend for going into the Committee, that the whole people of both kingdoms may know what is the real basis on which we wish to treat. In this way only can we hope to baffle the various misrepresentations which are industriously propagated on this momentous business. I am the more desirous of it, because I contend, the honourable gentlemen, who lay so much stress on the decision of the Commons of Ireland, carry the conclusion from that circumstance much farther than they are warranted. Even the Irish House of Commons have not said that they will never agitate the business again; it would, indeed, have been strange if they had done so. After the decision in the House of Commons, an attempt was made to carry a resolution for setting the question aside altogether by an honourable Member (Mr. G. Ponsonby), whose motion the House thought proper to reject. [*It was here remarked across the table, that the motion was not rejected, but withdrawn*] This difference in the term, Sir, makes but very little alteration in the state of the fact; for it is very well known, that gentlemen, warmly embarked in strong party questions,

are not very likely to withdraw them, unless the disposition of the House indicates that, if pressed, they will be rejected—such, no doubt, is the case in the instance alluded to. The honourable gentleman succeeded in his opposition to the address, but he failed in the motion with which he attempted to follow it.

All that is at present proposed, I again state, is to give the People and Parliament of Ireland time and opportunity to know and consider what the English Parliament is willing to share with them, without attempting the smallest interference with their independence.

Many objections, Sir, have been made to the time of bringing forward these propositions, as if it were the worst and most unseasonable that could possibly be selected. It is, however, agreed on all hands, that the situation of Ireland is truly alarming; that it is threatened with the greatest dangers; and that to avert them requires the fullest attention, and the utmost exertions of Government. The only difference of opinion, therefore, is, with respect to the means by which the evils can be remedied. The Administration of this Country proposes a Union, as the only sure and effectual means of affording it tranquillity at home and security from external attacks. On the other side of the House, though a Union was objected to, no other remedy has been offered. For my part, I conceive that there is a peculiar propriety in bringing forward the proposal at this very critical time, when the reports of both Houses of Parliament in Ireland afforded irrefragable demonstration, that there still exists amongst them a deep and formidable conspiracy to separate that kingdom from Great Britain, and totally destroy all friendly connection between them. What then are the best means to meet and defeat the ends of this conspiracy, and disappoint the hopes of those by whom it is supported and fomented? I know of no mode of effectually doing so, but to cement and consolidate, into one powerful and irresistible body, the strength of the whole empire, by a Union of the two Legislatures.

The similarity of the circumstances induces me again to recur to the opposition, so frequently and strenuously given; to the proposal of a Union with Scotland. In various periods of our History attempts had been made to effectuate this favourite object, and as frequently frustrated. I shall shortly glance over the history of these attempts, beginning with that of Henry the Eighth, who offered his daughter Mary to James the Fifth of Scotland, holding out such inducements as the Scottish King was inclined to listen to; but the plan was defeated by the intrigues of the French and the Popish faction. Edward the Sixth of England, in pursuance of his

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father's design, offered himself to Mary Queen of Scotland; and though it was agreed to by the Parliament of that country, the interference of the same faction rendered this treaty as fruitless as the former. The plan was again renewed in the reign of James the First; and though Articles of Union were agreed to by Commissioners of both countries assembled at Westminster, and ratified conditionally by the Scotch Parliament, yet the jealousy of the High Churchmen at that time caused them to be rejected in England. The plan was again brought forward in the reign of Charles the First, but ended in some unavailing conferences amongst the Commissioners appointed to manage it. In the reign of William and Mary, the proposition for a Union came from the Scotch Convention, and, on a recommendation from the Crown, the English House of Peers passed a bill for appointing Commissioners for treating of a Union of the two kingdoms, which bill was thrown out by the Commons. Thus the matter rested till the reign of Queen Anne, at whose accession the project also failed, through the High Church influence. But some reverses in the progress of the war, and some events which took place in Scotland, made England take the alarm, and be as anxious for the accomplishment of the Union, as it was before forward in rejecting it. And here I wish it to be recollected, that when propositions to this effect failed in Scotland, it always happened through French influence and French intrigue. I remember a curious simile, which was urged as an argument against the Union in the reign of James the First, to shew that Scotland must be the sufferer, "If a rich field," said one of the Commissioners, "lie next to a poor field, the latter must be the loser, as all the cattle would not fail to go into the richer pasture."—After the Union was effected, many, no doubt, did from time to time come into the richer field, without, however, any injury being sustained by the fields from which they departed. It appeared then, that what first induced the people of England to become zealous for, and to urge a Union with Scotland, was to prevent the bad effects of party and French intrigue in that country.

What was then the situation of Scotland, now became, by various accidents, that of Ireland. France labours by every means to form a connection in that country, and has in a great measure succeeded, as recent and unfortunate events testify: a Union is proposed by Great Britain, as the surest way to put an end to this dangerous conspiracy, by a consolidation of the whole powers of the empire.

Those who most admire the transactions which took place in 1782, must admit, that no arrangement has yet taken place ade-

quate to the cure of those diseases which threaten the destruction of Ireland; and those who were particularly concerned in the settlement of that degree of Irish independence alluded to, had uniformly avowed, that something farther was necessary, for the reciprocity of interests between the two countries so ardently wished for by the friends of both. If this deficiency of social compact between Great Britain and Ireland be acknowledged, as a recurrence to the proceedings of the times will verify, then it follows, that it was in the contemplation of those in power at that time to advance, as soon as convenient, to the completion of this grand principle. It is needless to state reasons, or conjectures, for the delay of this final adjustment of amity: a variety of circumstances contributed to it; but I have no hesitation, Sir, in saying, that if such a plan as that intended had been discussed and confirmed by the Parliaments of both countries, it is more than probable, that we should not now have to lament the acts of outrage and rebellion which have so recently convulsed and despoiled our sister kingdom. It was this lamentable defect in the compact that excited the turbulent and obnoxious of Ireland—it was this lamentable defect that gave rise to the most dangerous passions and animosities—it, in fact, presented Ireland with more resentments to satiate, and less authority to control. While, then, we deplore the late abominable excesses, it is our duty to prevent the return of the sanguinary scenes, by a Union of national interest, likely to reconcile and command the affections of the people.

I again, Sir, affirm, that in any thing which has fallen from me for the purpose of elucidating my arguments, I mean to cast no imputation on the Parliament of Ireland. I maintain, that with respect to the Catholics, they are under the influence of prejudice; I know, at the same time, that it is a prejudice inseparable from the nature of their situation. Attempts were made to shew, that the exclusions under which the Catholics of this country laboured, did not augur well for the Catholics of Ireland, when they should come under our legislation. Here again I am at issue with gentlemen who advance this hypothesis; and I do most sincerely maintain, that a Union is likely to prove advantageous to the Catholics of both countries, as under the same Legislature there is every probability that, after some time, the same measure of indulgence will be equally distributed to both. The Irish will stand a chance of being soon put upon the same footing with the English; and should it ever be found prudent wholly to improve the condition of the great majority of the Irish nation, the English Catholics might expect to be no longer under any restraints. But after all, I am of

opinion, there is no comparison between the state of the Catholics in the two kingdoms; for if in England considerations of policy have hitherto imposed some restrictions on the Catholics, I am fully persuaded that they do not think their interests neglected, or that any sentiments of animosity, jealousy, or discord, are entertained against them. They may, and naturally do regret the exclusions to which they are subjected; but they never, for a moment, entertain a thought that there exists against them a hostile spirit, either in the Legislative or Executive Government of this country. Nobody will venture to assert, that such is the feeling of the Catholics of Ireland.

If any Irishman should unfortunately prefer French fraternity to British liberty, I would most earnestly impress upon his mind the horrors and devastations of the Continent. Should he entertain a doubt of French rapine and murder, let him cast his eyes on Brabant, Holland, Switzerland, Italy and Egypt. In these miserable countries, he would find the unparalleled effects of the fertile genius of innovation and reform—he would there find innumerable examples of a violation of faith—he might there trace the agents of villainy starting from one extreme of iniquity to another, scoffing and scorning justice and humanity; and, in the very face of Heaven, defying divine vengeance. These are the bitter effects of French fraternity, and by which its miserable victims have been sunk in agonies of confusion and despair.

I beg pardon, Sir, for having troubled the House at so great length (two hours and twenty minutes); but the observations advanced on the other side, and the circumstances of the case, require that I should take a comprehensive view of the whole subject; and from every consideration, I am induced, Sir, to vote for your leaving the chair.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that after having resumed the question at so great length in the former part of this evening, it was not his intention to have troubled them again; but that some parts of the right honourable gentleman's speech, in answer to his honourable friend (Mr. Grey), required that he should request the attention of the House to their fallacy, as well as the failure of the right honourable gentleman's promises respecting them. He then shewed that the right honourable gentleman had pledged himself to answer Mr. Grey's speech, and had but slightly touched on any part of it—had charged him with uttering inconsistencies, not one of which he had been able to point out. Mr. Sheridan then proceeded to take some parts of the right honourable gentleman's speech which struck him as very extraordinary, and he would begin by alluding

to the latter part of his speech first. The right honourable gentlemen had laid great stress on the necessity of the Union, from the determination of the French to use their utmost exertions for the separation of the two countries; but he denied that the measure could have the desired effect, or in the least to cause the French to desist or relax in their designs, because he contended that the French had never built their hopes, in the smallest degree, on the separation of the two Legislatures, as had been inferred by the right honourable gentleman; but on the contrary, had all along rested their hopes on the desires and discontents of the great body of the people. If, therefore, these resolutions, by being pushed forward at the present moment, contrary to the sense of the Irish Parliament, as well as to that of the people, the French would have greater cause than ever to resume and redouble their exertions, and to irritate farther the minds of the Irish nation, as well as the Parliament, on a subject to which they were so feelingly alive, must, he feared, be attended with the most mischievous consequences. The right honourable gentleman, he said, had built his argument very much on the discontents in Ireland being founded on the excluded situation of the Catholics, and had held out by way of lure, that if Ireland came under the regulation of an incorporated and Imperial Parliament, their situation might be altered for the better. But unfortunately for the right honourable gentleman's argument, another part of his speech proved how little they had to expect on that head; for he had shewn, that the British Parliament had, without the same excuse of that body in England, forming three fourths of the community; and therefore, without the dread of their participation of equal privileges with the Protestants, being attended with that danger to the supremacy of the Protestant interest, had acted far more illiberally towards the Catholics than the Parliament of Ireland, under all the inequalities attending their Members, had ever done. He then asked, to what cause was this to be attributed? To the influence, said he, of the English Councils—Can it be attributed to the Irish Parliament? He denied that it could; for it was evident, during the Vice-royalty of Lord Fitzwilliam, that the measure had been announced as intended to be carried into effect, and that the Irish Parliament had never shewn or expressed any alarm at it, nor any intention of opposing it; and he had no doubt, had not that noble personage been so abruptly and unaccountably recalled, the measure would have passed the Irish Parliament. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) had said, that all he wished for was time; and on some expression of countenance, or motion of body which had been made by him, the right honourable gentleman had in-

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inferred that he meant to gain time for the purposes of corruption or intimidation. He confessed the right honourable gentleman was right in his conjecture; he did mean so;—he did intend to signify by the shrug, or whatever other gesture he used, that the time wished for by the right honourable gentleman, was meant to be used for the same ends and purposes as had been effected with the Duke of Hamilton, when he was brought off from his opposition, without which the Scotch Union would not have taken place. The right honourable gentleman had said, he wished to treat with Ireland on equal terms; but he (Mr. Sheridan) denied that that was possible, in the present situation of Ireland—for, surrounded as they were with English troops, which were said to be necessary for their defence, and depending, as it had been said, on the British Parliament for the continuance of their commercial advantages, they could not be in a situation to give a free assent. The right honourable gentleman had said, he made no reflection on the Irish Parliament, but he had certainly described them in a most confined and pitiful point of view. The right honourable gentleman had, however, discovered one peculiar privilege with which Ireland had been gifted by nature, and that was, she was surrounded by the sea. With this extraordinary advantage, however, he would advise the Irish Parliament to give up the narrow and contracted sphere in which they exercised their independence, in order to expand their views and enlarge their consequence by transplanting themselves into the Imperial Parliament, where they would derive so many advantages. Yes, Sirs, said he, where they will derive the advantage of quitting a Parliament where their Chancellor of the Exchequer was turned out of his place for acting according to the dictates of his conscience, and what he deemed the interests of his country, and be transplanted to the Imperial Parliament, where they will behold a Chancellor of the Exchequer, whom no human power is likely to turn out of his situation. They might, perhaps, have the farther advantage of being transplanted into the Imperial Parliament, of coming into an equal participation of the share in four hundred millions of debt owing by this country—[Here a cry of “No, no.”] Mr. Sheridan then said, that after what he had many times heard of the competence and omnipotence of Parliament, there was no safeguard that he knew of, after the lengths the argument had been carried, that could be depended upon against their breaking or annulling any compact they might at any time chuse to enter into on that or any other subject. The right honourable gentleman had been very diffuse in describing the benefits which Scotland had derived from the Union; and, indeed, on a measure which professed

to have for its object the effecting the peace and tranquillity of a nation, the speech of the right honourable gentleman had one very eligible feature, as it was fraught with a considerable degree of pleasantry and good humour. But this good humour and pleasantry might be assumed, for the purpose of deceiving the House into an opinion, that the question was not of that serious and important nature, which it ought, in his opinion, to be viewed in. The right honourable gentleman had very facetiously, in leaning over the table, favoured the House with the recitals of several predictions of a Lord Belhaven, in one of which he says, that Mother Caledonia was stabbed by Julius Cæsar. Now, said he, Lord Belhaven might have remembered that Julius Cæsar was stabbed by Brutus: and supposing that Mother Caledonia was about to be stabbed by her sons, he might have confined her assassination to the stabbing of Julius Cæsar; but that he could predict that Mother Caledonia would be stabbed by Julius Cæsar, was truly preposterous. From this inaccuracy, he thought he might fairly infer, that there was not much truth in the statements of the right honourable gentleman, relative to the Manifesto of the Pretender. The right honourable gentleman had said, that he had been obliged to strike out a part of it, which promised a repeal of the Union. On his asking him across the table, if it was true? The right honourable gentleman had answered, he had read it somewhere. Now, said Mr. Sheridan, I have been frequently credibly informed, that the fact was exactly the reverse. However, be this as it may, said he, Ireland may receive all these benefits without a Union; and to prove this, he had only to appeal to the rapid and incalculable growth of the prosperity of the Irish commerce she had gained her political independence. The right honourable gentleman had asserted, that the majority of the Irish Parliament was trifling, as it amounted only to five; but he contended, that when the nature of that majority, consisting of the men it was composed of, contrasted with the minority, composed of placemen, it was a prodigious and weighty majority indeed. He then proceeded to notice what had fallen from Mr. Dundas relative to the motion made by Mr. George Ponsonby, and denied the right honourable gentleman's inference, that it was rejected. He contended that it was only withdrawn, and that upon the argument of, "Why press it at this moment, when it may be entirely useless? The English Minister will never think of pressing this business, after he knows the decision of the Irish Parliament; for the present, therefore, do not urge the question." On this, said Mr. Sheridan, the motion was withdrawn; but when the intention of the Minister comes to be known, I have no doubt but it will be

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immediately resumed. I now come, said Mr. Sheridan, to a point which I cannot avoid taking notice of on the present occasion—I mean the competency of the Irish Parliament to discuss the matter. The right honourable gentleman opposite to me has talked of “a sovereignty in abeyance in the people,” and denied it on the ground that, if it was allowed, all the acts passed by the Parliament, such as the Septennial Act, the Act of Union, &c. &c. are nullities—that you, Sir, sitting in that chair, are a usurper; that we are all usurpers who hold seats in this House. Sir, I deny this doctrine; I say there is a sovereignty in abeyance in the people; and if there is not, I contend that the present family on the throne are usurpers—The practice of the Revolution clearly shews the force of the argument. When King James the Second abdicated the Crown, the Parliament did not proceed to do any act of itself for settling the Crown, but expressly called a Convention, which the Lord Mayor of London and fifty Commoners were invited to attend. All the Members who had sat in the Parliament of Charles the Second were also summoned; and every step which could be taken in the then pressing exigency of affairs, was actually taken to shew that the appointment to the Crown was in the People, and in them only.” Mr. Sheridan urged this part of the argument with great force and ability in several points of view, which the lateness of the hour, abridged by the length of the former part of the debate, will not allow us to touch upon. He concluded by giving his hearty negative to the Speaker’s leaving the chair. What we have already given is, indeed, a mere abridged outline; and we are sorry the same cause will oblige us to be more brief with the speeches of those gentlemen who are to follow.

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR did not intend to enter into all the topics in discussion. He thought the honourable gentleman opposite to him had all along proceeded on a mistake, and appeared to imagine that Union was sought for the advantage of England and not of Ireland. It was proposed, however, because it was advantageous to Ireland immediately, and to say the most, its advantages to England were remote and relative, scarce of any commercial consequence at all. Considering this, she felt some impatience at the manner it was discussed in Ireland, and no very great complacency for the opposers of the measure in this country. He did not know what England had to wish from such a connection, for she commanded already all the commerce of the world, and amply possessed the means of defence. As to the constitutional question, that it was an innovation, he was one of those who never was an

enemy to the maxim of Mending what was wrong in the systems of polity, provided the time was suited to the enterprize. If Ireland was in a state politically to require amelioration, it was right that something should be done to correct whatever was vicious in her system. He believed Union would do this. It was the only measure which, to his mind, suggested an adequate remedy to so great and so growing an evil, and it should have his support on other general but just grounds. What in fact was the nature of the contract? It was a bargain, a consolidation of interests by which Ireland was to benefit great commercial immunities, in which England had much to lose and nothing to gain, and Ireland had much to gain and very little to lose. He maintained that the disorders of Ireland grew chiefly out of the Constitution of Ireland established for near a century and a half; and it was impossible that a Government agitated as that of the sister kingdom had been, a Government distorted in every limb, could enjoy health or long survive those diseases, some slow, some acute—which were sickly of aspect, which had made her feeble of heart. For a long time the turbulence of the people knew no restraint from authority, and their ferocity was without a corrective from reason. The Government was situated as it were in a garrisoned town, and regarding the people with jealousy, the people in their turn regarded the government as an usurpation or worse. But the seeds of the mischief were in the Constitution itself, for it contained not a principle by which the ignorance of the people could be removed, or their ferocity suppressed. The country, indeed might well be compared to a wolf, which it was neither safe to hold by the ears, or safe to let go. The proximate immediate evil was, however, French principles;

“ ————That leperous distillment

“ Which holds such enmity to the blood of man.”

It had withered the aged, had vitiated the youthful, had polluted the sources of thought, and given to the whole system of manners and of morals a malignity of character, a grossness and lassitude, which had rendered the obligations between men little else than nugatory, and had introduced, instead of religion, infidelity; instead of allegiance, disaffection; instead of loyalty, a lust for treasons. It had been remarked by some ancient writers, that the Demagogues considered the people a Sea that might be agitated by a breath. Now the Propagandists of France appeared to have proceeded on some such principle in Ireland. They there found a people light and unreflecting, where it was easy to practise the arts of a political seduction. They made that plea of national delusion, which they have ever since kept in a state of agitation and restlessness. Mr. Windham

next vindicated the Government of Great Britain from the charge of corruption, and maintained, that the cure of the disorders with which Ireland was convulsed, could only be effectually found in the improvement of the manners of the lower orders of the people, by the introduction of British customs and British commerce, which, in his opinion, the Union bid fairer to do than any other means that could possibly be devised. The only question was, "Is a Union of the two countries desirable or not?" He took a view of the situation of the Catholics, and said, that they were a tolerated body to a great degree, but there must be an established religion, if society was to be kept wholesome and sound. "Where," said Mr. Windham, "you have RELIGION, at least you have not PURE JACOBINISM; but those who are completely jacobinized, are lost—they have sustained a loss of substance which no physician can restore. But such who have not yet been wholly depraved, such who retain some of the early principles and honourable and revered prejudices of a Christian education, may in time be restored to soundness and health." Having urged the arguments of Mr. Dundas respecting the Catholics, he next took up the question of time, and said, that in the present circumstances of the country something must be done, and what was wanted was some measure by which we could secure the tranquillity of Ireland. It could not be intended to force a Union, for this would defeat the end of it. But when the time should arrive that it would be possible to appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober; from an Irish Parliament intoxicated with pride and passion, to an Irish Parliament sobered by reflection and tempered by wisdom, the propositions of his right honourable friend would, he had no doubt, meet with the general approbation of the Irish Parliament and People. With respect to intimidation, that could not be intimidation which left a choice. The honourable gentleman wished the discussion might be deferred till passion should subside, and prejudice be corrected; but, while the causes of irritation remained, was not this putting it off *ad græcas calendas*? One honourable gentleman thought it impossible that the Irish could give a free assent to the measure in the present situation of their country; but did the honourable gentleman not know that where there is a power to dissent, there is also freedom of assent, and the Parliament of Ireland having rejected the proposition, or rather declined at all to enter into the discussion, at least such was the fact with respect to one branch of the Legislature, it proved that the people, by their representatives, might as easily have given a free assent as expressed their dissent. He concurred in opinion with his right honourable friend, Mr. Dundas, respecting the general effect of the

Union of England with Scotland, observing that though with the revolutions which commercial affairs had of late years experienced, Scotland would necessarily have grown into some importance as a trading nation, yet the advantages derived by her from the closeness of her connection, were such as she could in no other way have acquired. He saw nothing disrespectful in the language which had been held of the Irish Parliament, and although it certainly might be said that the propositions of his right honourable friend would reach the Irish public through the medium of speeches and pamphlets, he thought it politic and respectful solemnly to record the opinion of the Parliament of Great Britain of the present state of the connection between the two countries, and of the means by which the troubles that agitate the one are to be allayed, and the remedy which the other, in her solicitude for a sister kingdom, seeks to apply to the disease. He would not then enter upon the discussion which the honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) had agitated towards the close of his speech. It was concerning a question of general abstract principles of Government, and he thought it enough to say that he most completely concurred in opinion with his right honourable friend, that the people have no political right to change the government, or to resist it, whatever might be the moral right which a people would be allowed speculatively to possess. The right of resistance was not a right acknowledged by or known to the British Constitution. He concluded with expressing himself decidedly for the motion.

Mr. TIERNEY. Sir, I never in my life rose to speak upon any question with more uneasiness than I do upon the present. I never thought the right honourable gentleman would have brought forward a measure like this without having examined, in the first instance, whether or not it was likely to be acceptable; nor did I think, after what has passed, that he would have persevered in the measure. He has, however, thought proper to persevere, and he must take the consequences. Sir, I expect an answer to this question, which I think decisive upon the subject: What advantages can be gained by a Union, which cannot be obtained without it? I am clearly of opinion that these resolutions would produce the same effect if they were sent over without Parliament being pledged to them. I was surprised to hear gentlemen declare they would not use any disrespectful language to that country, when one of them compared it to the Bahama Islands, and the other to a wolf. But it is said that we abused the Irish Parliament; if gentlemen allude to the statement of there being 116 placemen in it, that assertion was made in the Parliament of Ireland. Sir, this is a question of

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the greatest importance, and I really do not see that the advantages which it holds out are likely to compensate the danger that may result from it. Even its strongest advocates only state the advantages as probable. Much has been said of the advantages which this measure holds out to the Catholics: all that you can now give them is, the privilege of holding certain places, and of sitting in Parliament. But the latter would be a very trifling privilege; for such is the distribution of property in that country; that in fifty years, fifty Catholics would not get seats in Parliament. If the Catholics in Ireland correspond with the Dissenters in England, they will find that they have not much to expect from the tolerating spirit of the English Parliament. The great argument in favour of this measure is, that it would defeat the hopes of the foreign and domestic enemies of that country. I do not think that it would prevent the attempts of the enemy, nor put an end to intestine troubles; because we now see that its effects would be to create still greater divisions than exist even at present in that unhappy country. I am very sorry that the question of Parliamentary Competence has been brought into discussion; it is a very nice question. It has been said, that there are many instances in which the competence of Parliament has been tried, and the case of the Union with Scotland has been alluded to; but that does not appear to me to be in point, for I think the Parliament can do every thing but destroy themselves, and in the case of the Scotch Union the Parliament of England did not destroy themselves; and this is, I think, a very obvious distinction. Much has been said of the benefits resulting to Scotland from the Union, and the right honourable gentleman has given several statements upon that subject; but though he has proved that Scotland has increased in prosperity; he has not attempted to prove that that prosperity has been the consequence of the Union. It is said something must be done for Ireland; and then we are told that these resolutions are not to be acted upon: then I should be glad to be informed what is to be done for Ireland? I have no doubt but that the people of Ireland will treat his resolutions as they have treated his speech, viz. that they will paste them up on the walls as arguments against the Union. If this was all, I should not mind it; but if you agree to this motion, it will not be the Ministers, but the Parliament of England that is implicated. If you persevere, every step you take will be looked upon with suspicion. If you send over more troops, the object may be misrepresented. I understand that more troops are to be sent over, and that letters have been sent to the commanders of some militia regiments to know if they are willing to go to Ire-

land, and stating that the Government of that country must be maintained by force. I shall be glad to know, Sir, why it is necessary now to send more troops to Ireland? Those that are there at present were deemed sufficient for its defence, before the defeat of the enemy's last attempt, and before the destruction of their navy. And now that those attempts have been frustrated, and that navy destroyed, it cannot surely be necessary to send more troops. With respect to the officers of those regiments who volunteered their service in Ireland, I do think this will put them in a very hard situation. I have the highest respect for their spirit, and the motives which actuated them, but I am very sure that if the proposition for the Union had been made before they volunteered their services, they would at least have paused before they made the offer. Sir, one of the strongest reasons which operates in my mind against this measure is, that there is no necessity which calls for its immediate adoption. I am by no means contending that it is radically a bad measure, or that we ought to abandon it for ever, but I merely wish to convince the right honourable gentleman and the House, that after the opinion which has been expressed in the Irish Parliament, and throughout that country, against it, he ought, at least for the present, to abstain from pressing it. It is said, that it is probable that the Parliament of Ireland may change their opinion upon this subject. I am by no means inclined to think so; but I am sure there is much less probability that the people of Ireland should be brought to change an opinion which they have strongly and almost unanimously expressed. Considering this subject in another point of view, I cannot but recollect that I stand here representing commercial people, and I think I should betray their interests, if I pledged myself unnecessarily to resolutions by which they may be ultimately affected. I cannot conceive upon what principle I, as a British Member of Parliament, should pledge myself to certain resolutions, when, on the other hand, the Parliament of Ireland refuse to pledge themselves to any thing. I cannot conceive why we should pledge ourselves to give up a part of our Constitution, while the Parliament of Ireland have declared they will not give up any of theirs. If, however, this measure is to pass, and we are to have these Members from Ireland, I should wish to suggest, as a preliminary measure, that they ought at least to be purified before they come here. I do not mean to refer to any idea of Parliamentary Corruption, but I refer to a statement of Mr. Cook's, who states that they are chosen in Ireland merely for the purpose of keeping out the Catholics. I should be glad to be informed upon what principle it is, that the number of Spiritual Peers is to be in

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creased in the other House of Parliament? It cannot be said that the Reverend Bishops are inattentive to the interests of the Church, and that we must have some from Ireland, in order to secure the Protestant ascendancy. These, however, are points which I should not press, if the two countries were cordially considering the question of the Union; but at present, as Ireland has rejected all consideration of the subject, I do not think it wise that we should pledge ourselves to resolutions which we might find hereafter extremely inconvenient. But, Sir, I am afraid the truth of all this is, that the right honourable gentleman's pride has been hurt. I have heard that he has not yet forgiven the Parliament of Ireland, for their conduct upon the Regency; but all I ask of him is, that we should not be made parties to his resentment. If he is determined to play Guy Faux to the Parliament of Ireland, let him do it, if he pleases, but let us not furnish him with a cloak and dark lantern. The right honourable Secretary of State, who had drawn so many arguments from the prosperous state of Scotland, seemed to have confounded himself with his country, and endeavoured to prove the benefits which had followed to Scotland by a statement of the prosperity which had flowed upon himself. Indeed the whole of his argument seemed calculated to persuade the Irish Parliament to engage in this, as likely to turn out a good speculation for themselves. Sir, I have now stated a few observations with which I meant to trouble the House upon this subject; deprecating, as I do, the farther progress of this measure, I do implore the right honourable gentleman and the House not to persevere in it at present. I do not wish to hurt his feelings; on the contrary, I wish the House to reject the consideration of it in any way that may be considered as not having that effect.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS explained. He did not say that the Imperial Parliament would be a good field of enterprise and adventure to the Members of the Irish Parliament: what he said was, that the Imperial Parliament would afford a wider field for the display of talent; and that from the magnitude of the interests which must come into discussion in it, the consequence and respectability of the representatives would be increased. The honourable gentleman must permit him to say it was impertinent in him to put words into his mouth he had never used.

Mr. TIERNEY—"Does the honourable gentleman mean to call my observation impertinent?"

A cry—"The question—the question!"

Mr. Tierney—"I consider such language unparliamentary; but I must say, I think the right honourable gentleman would not

have used it, had he reflected for one moment on the nature of it."

Mr. GREY thought his honourable friend had been misled by momentary warmth, and believed Mr. Dundas did not use the expression.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, he used the expression; but the honourable gentleman ought to recollect, that expressions not wholly free from harshness had been used by him in the course of his speech, and of all the Members of that House, he thought the honourable gentleman had least reason to be quick in his perception or prompt in complaining of any slight incorrectness of expression. But the epithet was not, he believed, unparliamentary: it might with perfect propriety, and quite within the rules of the House, be said at any time, that an argument or expression is not pertinent.

Mr. TIERNEY expressed himself satisfied with this explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that undoubtedly the expression, as it had been used, did appear to him to be unparliamentary, but knowing that it would admit of an equivocal interpretation, he thought it best to decline interfering while there remained an opportunity for explanation.

Mr. Wm. GRANT took a concise view of the question. He considered the arguments of the honourable gentleman opposite to him to be these three—1. That the present is not the proper time, because the free assent of the people of Ireland cannot be obtained to the measure:—2. That the project of Union is not only nugatory now, but would be so at all times, because the Parliament had no power to accede to it: and the third, that after what passed in Ireland the discussion is improper and unnecessary; unnecessary, because nothing can be effected by it that can possibly lead to Constitutional Union; improper, because it would lead to irritation in the great body of the Irish people. On these topics Mr. Grant argued with much ingenuity, and pursuing the opinion of his right honourable friend (Mr. Windham) he contended that a free assent can be given; and as to the competency of the Parliament of Ireland to decide such a question, it was in fact but the treaty of two independent Parliaments who had a power to do whatever the Constitution had not forbidden, and that its competency was not more a question than the competency of the electors to whom the question must in fairness first be referred; from them it must go to the people at large, who must be assembled in convention on Salisbury Plain; but even when there assembled, every individual vote must be collected, and a majority must decide the question, to be a con-

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clusive decision. Gentlemen would see to what ridiculous lengths their theoretical dogma might be carried, and he must think they saw their fallacy. He concluded with giving his hearty support to the motion.

Mr. W. SMITH spoke shortly on the subject.

The House then divided—For the Speaker's leaving the chair, 149; Against it, 24.

The House then went into a Committee *pro forma*, when

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it would be improper to proceed farther at that late hour, and hoped the Speaker's leaving the chair would not be opposed at any future day, the question having been now decided.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he would not pledge himself to agree to the Speaker's leaving the chair at any time, as the intelligence from Ireland was of so alarming a nature, that it would be impolitic to entertain the question at all.

Mr. Chancellor PITT answered, that of the Irish Parliament he would say nothing, but he was confident the Irish people approved the measure; and we understand (strangers being excluded), he intimated his determination of persevering in the project. The Committee on the Union reported progress, and asked leave to sit again on Monday, after which the House adjourned.

The following is a more correct Report of

The DUKE of BEDFORD's SPEECH

IN THE

HOUSE OF LORDS

On the 22d of March, 1798.

MY LORDS,

IF I had ever had any sanguine hope of succeeding in a motion for the removal of the present Ministers, I must confess that the different adjournments, which have intervened since I first gave notice of it, would have given me great uneasiness: but, entertaining no such hope, I should not have mentioned them, if I had not been anxious to return the House my sincere thanks for their indulgence in consenting to the first adjournment: and, if I were now to follow my own disposition and opinion, I should give your Lordships but little trouble. I should certainly content myself with submitting the motion to the consideration of the House, without attempting to argue the necessity of adopting it, because I am too well assured by experience, that, if you do not already feel the necessity of it, if the situation of the country does not appear to you truly alarming, if you do not attribute our misfortune to the misconduct of the present Ministers, no argument of mine will have any effect, or entitle me to hope for success. Conceiving, however, that you might attribute such conduct to disrespect, I shall endeavour to justify myself in bringing forward this motion, by calling your attention to many objects of the highest importance,—the situation of the country with respect to foreign enemies; the principal events of the last five years; the conduct of Ministers in prosecuting the war, as well as in their attempts to negotiate; the state of our finances; the state of our internal government; and the deplorable situation of Ireland.

It will not require a long detail of facts, nor a great deal of argument to prove, that in the career which the present Ministers have pursued, they have been supported by your implicit confidence, that they have been strengthened by all the concurrence necessary to give energy to their measures, and have never been thwarted by any opposition on the part of this House, that could obstruct or retard the success of their operations. Whenever you have been called upon

to inquire into particular measures, or into the general conduct of Administration, you have uniformly refused to enter into any inquiry. His Majesty's Ministers have been left at liberty to follow their own plans, and furnished with ample means to carry them into execution. If, therefore, I shall be able to show that, notwithstanding all the confidence they have enjoyed, and all the means with which they have been trusted, they have reduced the country to its present state of danger and distress by absolute misconduct and incapacity, I think your Lordships will be unavoidably bound to conclude as I do, that no rational hope can be entertained of future benefit from the exertions of the same persons, who have created the difficulty; and their dismissal is indispensable, and that, on this ground, your Lordships, who are the guardians of the public welfare, are imperiously called upon to adopt the address, which I shall have the honour of proposing to you, or some other to the same effect.

I do not mean to detain you, by entering into a discussion of the origin and causes of the war. It will not, however, be impertinent or unseasonable to remind you, that, prior to the commencement of the war, Ministers were charged by those who were friends to peace, with pursuing a line of conduct, which infallibly led to hostilities, and that the war was the natural consequence of the policy, upon which Ministers had long acted. My object now is to show you, that the only remedy left is to dispossess the men, who have done so much mischief, of the power of doing more. As to a direct criminal accusation against Ministers, I shall forbear from it at present. That duty will be better suited to a moment of tranquillity, when the absence of danger may enable us more coolly to enter into the investigation of guilt.

With whatever sentiments Ministers may have been supposed to contemplate the prospect of a war, and whatever means they may have employed to prevent it, yet it will be recollected, that the declaration of war, on the part of the French, was received here with the utmost joy; that the Ministers could not conceal their satisfaction at being furnished with a formal pretence for alledging that the French were the aggressors, and with an ostensible justification for entering into the war, as if they themselves had not provoked it. It was viewed, not as a matter of melancholy and regret, but of triumph and exultation. Those, however, who thought that greater exertions and a different conduct ought to have been employed to prevent a rupture with France, left no effort untried to avert the evils, in which we were likely to be involved, or at least to retard the progress of calamities, which might have been avoided. Re-

monstrances were made against the measures which Ministers pursued. It was contended, that by a firm, a manly, and an open conduct, France might still be turned to peace, and that every ground of dispute might be removed. Parliament was called upon to declare that this country would not interfere in the internal affairs of France; and afterwards, when the hostile views of Ministers became more systematic and less disguised, Parliament was called upon to address His Majesty to enter into no treaties with foreign powers, which would form an argument against peace, and embarrass the attainment of that object. To this no other answer was made, but that, since we were embarked in the contest, it was necessary to go on, and that every exertion ought to be made to strengthen the country, and to secure success.

Again, to remove all misunderstanding of the objects and views entertained in the prosecution of the war, Parliament was called upon to say, that the war was not undertaken for the purpose of aggrandisement, but on the benevolent principles expressed by His Majesty in his speech at the beginning of the session, and that, as the French were then defeated and reduced within their own territory, the moment was favourable for us to come forward with offers of peace. To this it was answered, in the exultation of prosperity, that being now engaged in a successful pursuit, we were bound to persevere in it, until the existing Government of France was replaced by a better system, and that the moment of success was not the moment to think of peace. Such was the language, with which every attempt to oppose the progress of the war was resisted. Ministers, however, my Lords, had not then avowed the whole of their designs; they did not then feel themselves firmly seated on their war horse; nor did they think themselves secure of continuing their conquests. If we had seized that opportunity for making peace, we should scarcely have felt the pressure of the war; for we had not then incurred a debt of more than six millions, nor had a greater annual charge been fixed upon the country than 250,000*l*. The succeeding period was more important. The next session was opened with a strong speech from the Throne, expressing to the country that we were not engaged in a war merely for defence, but for the destruction of rapine, anarchy, and impiety. It was contended, that we were not to look for peace, without first restoring order to France. Such were the arguments advanced. Then it was, my Lords, that the whole scope and range of the Ministers' plans were developed. Then had we a full view of their designs. Then did their wild and frantic schemes blaze forth in all their fury. Intent only on their own glory, they hoped to rival by their

exploits the proudest Minister of the proudest day that England had ever seen—they hoped, miserable men! to raise temples of fame, and trophies of victory, on the mutilated carcases of their fellow-creatures. They were disappointed. But you, my Lords, and the Nation, though actuated by better motives, still by your conduct contributed to produce this mischief. You, my Lords, justly shocked at the enormities of France, became unjust yourselves; and irritated at the impiety and irreligion professed by her rulers, assumed to yourselves, without right or vocation, the exercise of that vengeance, which a learned Prelate has so truly told you belongeth not to man. Still, my Lords, the advocates for peace attempted to induce Parliament to adopt a milder language. Neither disturbed by personal attacks within the walls of Parliament, nor awed by the popular clamour directed against them from without, but firm in their country's cause, and as anxious for its prosperity and glory as the proudest boaster in the nation, they steadily pursued the measures they had recommended. They told you, that, if you hoped to destroy France, it was a wild and foolish hope: they told you, if you hoped to destroy the rulers of France, the best way was by making peace. Other ideas prevailed, and were adopted: still, however, those, who kept the necessity of peace in view, persevered. They heard that new alliances were formed: they endeavoured to advise His Majesty to extricate himself from them whenever peace could be made with honour. They said, that there were no hopes of success in the continuance of the war; that you must not depend on your allies; for that some of them already began to feel the pressure of the war, and that, unless we assisted them with money, they must soon abandon us; that, in proportion as the difficulties of the enemy became great, they increased their exertions, and that in the end our own resources must fail us. The answer was, that we had hitherto been successful; that our resources were adequate to every emergency; that, though we might be somewhat affected, we were not, like the miserable Government of France, obliged to have recourse to forced loans.

Towards the close of that session, I did myself the honour to move certain resolutions to your Lordships. We had then been successful. I wished to call your Lordships' attention to our situation as it stood, and to seize that opportunity for putting an end to the war. I likewise called upon you to advise His Majesty to abstain from any interference in the internal affairs of France; or that, if you did mean to interfere, you should state some precise points. I did believe that such a declaration would have produced some advantage. In the confused state of France at that time, it was de-

fireable that the enemies of the existing Government should have known the particular object, which you wished to obtain. We were told, exultingly—"What! now, in the moment of success, shall we treat, when we have such confident hopes of attaining all we wish? No! Jacobinism in France must be destroyed! not only the present rulers must be cut off, but all, who entertain the same principles and sentiments with them, must be destroyed. We will never treat with men, who have dyed their hands in the blood of their Sovereign, and who have dared to call our King a tyrant, and our Parliament usurpers. Let us make one grand effort, and die, if we must die, with swords in our hands"—[A cry of "Hear! hear!" from Lord Grenville.]—Such was the proud triumphant language of Ministers at that period, and I am glad to find that the noble Secretary seems now to remember what, on other occasions, he and his colleagues seemed to have forgotten. In the hour of prosperity, indeed, their language was lofty, and their tone determined. But did they persevere in this temper? Did they discover a firmness in adversity corresponding to their presumption in success? Look at their conduct the next year, and see how these pretensions were justified.—The session then closed, and if peace had been obtained, we should not have experienced the financial difficulties under which we have since laboured, nor have to dread those with which we are now threatened. The sum then added to the capital of our debt was about twenty-two millions, and the annual amount of taxes one million.

Let us contrast this language of Ministers with what they said the next year. At the commencement of the following session the situation of affairs was somewhat changed. Ministers themselves began to think the prospects they had held out to be somewhat delusive, and to imagine that the continuance of conquest was not to be relied on. The people began to think it a war for the extermination of government, and not to be so fond of the pursuit. They perceived at last that it was not quite certain, which of the two governments might be exterminated; and, though they were delighted with the war as long as it succeeded, they were not at all comforted by the dilemma held out to them, of choosing between success and ruin. But, my Lords, some persons in Parliament also had changed their sentiments; our reverses were acknowledged; but it was said that the state of affairs in France was so distracted, and their finances so exhausted, that the cause of order, morality, and religion, must ultimately prevail. Flattering, however, as this prospect was, it did not lessen the wish for peace; in the other House an amendment was moved, in order to induce a declaration,

that it was then expedient to make peace. That amendment was rejected; soon afterwards, however, the advocates for peace, not disheartened by repeated defeats, were anxious to have the true meaning of Government understood: they gave a long notice of their intention; and they took care to draw up their motion so as to bring the question to a direct issue. They were surprised to find that Ministers were determined not to meet this question, but to get rid of it by an amendment. In order to soften their declaration, Ministers called upon the House to state that they were determined to persevere till such a government should be established in France, as might be capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of amity and peace; they did not say that the then Government was capable of maintaining them, nor did they define what government they would consider so. The advocates for peace, however, supported their original motion. They urged Parliament to negotiate, while they were able to prosecute the war with vigour; and they reminded the House that the relations of amity and peace had been maintained by France with other nations. At this time, too, Ministers were warned of the mischief that might arise in Ireland from the continuance of the war, and from persevering in the system they seemed inclined to adopt. But Ministers were not to be convinced by such arguments; though they felt that, if they still talked of dying with arms in their hands, they should not meet with much applause. On the one hand, they had to soften and satisfy the persons who were desirous of peace, while on the other, they had to rouse the drooping spirits of the country. They said, "What! will you treat when you have suffered reverses?" Last year they would not treat, because they were successful; this year they refused, because they had been defeated. If you treat now, they urged, you will acknowledge the superiority of the enemy. Had they said, if you treat now, you will acknowledge the incapacity of Ministers, they would have been right. Will you treat now, they added, with a Republic, and confess that that form of government is best? It will be a condemnation of your own; it will amount to a confession, that your King and Parliament are unfit to govern you. They held out to us, that the French possessed certain territories, which it would be absolutely ruinous to this country for them to keep, and which they could never be allowed to retain. They tried then the mercantile interest, and put it to them, whether they would give up the West-India islands, relinquish all hopes of indemnity—and at what time? When the situation of France was so exhausted and so desperate, that if we persevered, the brightest hopes of success might be entertained.

Nay, one person had been bold enough to say, that the finances of France were already exhausted, and he always knew they would be so. Yet still, my Lords, Ministers did not talk of monarchy in the language they had done formerly. We do not, said they, want a monarchy in France; we only want such a government as is capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of peace and amity; with such a Government, whether republican or not, we will treat. They told us in their arguments that they had given up indemnity; but they said, "Will you say we can treat with the existing government? Surely you cannot; for you may as well say we must now treat." This proves that they were fighting for the establishment of such a government in France as would please themselves. Where now, my Lords, was the lofty language, which talked of restoring the French Monarchy; Where were the supporters of the declaration issued by a noble Lord, opposite to me, at Toulon? Where were the men who said, that there was no middle line between anarchy and monarchy? They were all softened; they were softened, because they found that they could not maintain their principles without losing their situations. They then shewed that, however lofty their language had been in the hour of prosperity, they were ready to lower it as their prospects fell; that their moderation was progressive, and regularly increased in proportion to their difficulties. But their concession was of no advantage to their country. Their original tone was too exalted; and in their descending scale they were always too high for the occasion, on which concession was required; they encouraged the demands of the enemy, because the enemy knew that Ministers would ultimately accede to their demands. In this way, concession only produced disgrace, without promoting conciliation. Such was the situation, in which we were placed in the third year of the war. A debt of forty-seven millions had been incurred, and a permanent annual charge upon the country of 2,250,000*l*. With this the session closed. The opening of the next presented a different aspect of affairs. The allies had been successful. Yet, however elated Ministers might be at these successes, still they did not think them sufficient to warrant the resumption of their old strain of argument; but in answer to those, who still endeavoured for peace, they said that the state of things in France must lead to a crisis, the issue of which no one could foresee, but that great events might arise, which would be important to the interests of Europe. If the crisis terminated favourably, they would be ready to meet any proposition that might be made for peace. It was then endeavoured by the advocates for peace to be proved, that it would be better to attempt to

come to a conclusion ; and Parliament was urged to declare, that the then Government of France was capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of amity and peace. No success, however, was derived from that proposition. Ministers told us, that it would be humiliating to make such an acknowledgment when we had been successful. Here again our situation was brought forward as an argument against negotiating. But it was also said, that France was absolutely so exhausted, that another campaign was more than she could endure. Your Lordships may remember that on that occasion I moved an amendment. I said I would not enter into the involved question ; and that all I had to observe was, that in proportion as these predictions of Ministers were more peremptory, the energies of France became greater. Some compliments were paid me ; it was said, that I was perfectly competent to argue the question, but that I declined it from a conviction that little could be said. The event has proved whether I was right or wrong. But failing constantly in our attempts to make Parliament declare that France was capable of maintaining the relations of amity and peace, we learnt, with great surprise, in less than six weeks, that the crisis had ended favourably, and that Ministers declared themselves ready to meet any offers of negotiation. Now, surely, my Lords, those who were so anxious for a fixed form of government in France, ought to have taken more than six weeks to decide upon the new government, and whether it had sufficient stability or not. But thinking as we did, that you might have treated with any government that had existed since the commencement of the war, we had of course no objection to this offer of treating. We could not, however, help suspecting, that Ministers had no sincere desire for peace, but were anxious to concede a little, not to us certainly, but to those who were wavering between peace and war. This state of affairs produced the communication of a message from Mr. Wickham, an answer to it, and a note commenting upon both. Upon that message I have had occasion to remark before, and I have always said, and it is not my own opinion alone, but the opinion of men of all parties, with whom I have conversed, that that proceeding was the most unlikely means, that were ever adopted by any nation to secure a peace. You would have thought, at least, that some civility might have been used to the power, with whom you professed a wish to treat ; that, after all the insults offered, it would have been wise to have shown an inclination to acknowledge the Republic ; but it was studiously avoided. At this period the debt contracted was about 87,000,000*l.* ; the annual charge created 4,000,000*l.* When Ministers found that this step was

not quite sufficient to delude the people, they brought forward another negotiation, with a little more stage trick in it. If your Lordships, however, look at the negotiation under Lord Malmesbury, and can believe in your hearts that Ministers were sincere in their desire for peace, you must in your hearts believe, also, that they are the most incapable men for conducting a negotiation that ever lived. I have often, my Lords, adverted to that negotiation; I have said, that there was nothing conciliatory in it; but that the whole progress of it tended to teach the French to doubt your sincerity. They sent a person with powers to conclude, but not to treat. They sent him to treat for the Emperor, without power from the Emperor to treat or conclude. Look at the terms they offered, and then ask if they could be sincere? I had hoped, my Lords, on this day, to have spoken with a little more information; but even though the event to which I allude is so long past, I find Ministers are determined to give no information on the subject, and therefore I am warranted in contending, that there is nothing in those papers, which can prove the assertions that have been made by His Majesty's Ministers. But, my Lords, there is still enough, without recurring to farther information, to show the insincerity of Ministers; or, if they were sincere, to prove their wildness and their folly. What is it you propose to France? Recollect the situation in which you stood—recollect that you set out as the avengers of innocence, as the protectors of the oppressed; that you desired to curb the wild aggrandizement of France, not to get by the war; and then look at the terms you offer. Why, that with France, and the three Northern Powers, you are to despoil the little states—[A cry of "Hear! hear!"]—You, the avengers of innocence, the disinterested protectors of the oppressed, allow Poland to be divided without a remonstrance; you suffer France to retain some of her acquisitions; to give the Emperor something more to secure his frontier; and you are to keep a portion of what you have got. I do not mean certainly that you are to have any continental possessions, but you are to have the Cape and Trincomalé, and one of the French islands, provided the French are suffered to keep St. Domingo. You were to have part of the possessions of your allies the Dutch; the Emperor was to be left in the possession of Poland; so was Russia, so was Prussia. If peace had been concluded then, the parties, which had made the war to save property and to protect it from invasion, would all have been benefited by a new distribution of the property of others. The cession of Belgium was demanded as a *sine qua non*, in the clearest and most intelligible language, and upon that the negotiation went off. I thought, and I may now say

so, without incurring blame, or if I do, I have His Majesty's Ministers to participate in it with me, (for they have since proposed terms without demanding Belgium,) that Belgium ought to have been ceded, if France insisted on it; that, from her situation, she had a right to expect to keep it. It was the opinion of those, who did not know the calamities that awaited us, for we did not know that the Bank was soon to fail. They, however, who did know it, who must for two years have foreseen it, must have known that it was advisable to procure peace, not only upon those terms, but almost upon any terms. They must have known that such a peace would not only not have been a bad peace, but that the continuance of the war for another year would cost eighty millions. They did prosecute the war, eighty millions were spent, and Belgium is lost. If I could be convinced that Ministers were sincere in their first and second negotiations, I should have no right to doubt their sincerity in the third. But thinking, as I do, that they were neither sincere in the first nor the second, I am warranted in doubting their sincerity in the third; particularly when I find that they employed a second time a person, who had failed in the first instance. For that person, my Lords, I certainly have a personal respect. I believe him to be perfectly fit and competent; but I have always thought that there is some objection to employing a man in the same situation, in which he has failed before. My Lords, the French thought so too. I lay aside all the nonsense of suffering ourselves to be dictated to; but when I find that a negotiation has been unsuccessful with one person, I think it more likely to conciliate the power, with which you are about to treat, if you employ some other negotiator. But admitting, for the sake of argument, that Ministers were sincere, I contend they showed no talents for negotiation, and I am therefore warranted in saying, that we cannot look to them for a safe and equitable peace. Subsequent to the second negotiation, it was endeavoured by those, who still wished for peace, to induce your Lordships to resort to another line of conduct, since that, which Ministers had pursued, had repeatedly failed. The haughty demeanour they had observed, the irritating language they had held, their constantly refusing to acknowledge the French Republic, or endeavouring to avoid it; their refusal to listen to accommodation at the outset: all these circumstances disqualified them for acting the part of conciliation with any credit for sincerity, or any chance of success. The insolence, which they had displayed in prosperity, was not followed by firmness in adversity; and their concessions, though never calculated to procure peace, be-

trayed them to the enemy as weak and wavering statesmen, from whom every concession might ultimately be obtained. When such was the character of Ministers, and such the light in which they were viewed by the enemy, how could it be expected that peace would be the result of their hollow negotiations?

At the end of five years of war, then, let me call the attention of the House to a comparison of the situation, in which we stood at the outset, with that, which we now hold. We began the war in conjunction with the greatest confederacy ever known in Europe, and we are now without a single ally but Portugal! It was then said, what would our situation be, if we were obliged to wage war alone with France, while France was at peace with the other nations of Europe? How favourable a situation this, to that in which we now stand! We should have entered upon the contest with resources unimpaired, and, in the worst event, we should have seen at some years distance the calamity we now experience. Notwithstanding all the expence, which the war has heaped upon us, we see not a single effort exerted in vigorous attack, we are reduced to a state of inert self-defence. What hope of success have we in protracted war? What prospect have we of its termination? What prospect have we to cheer the gloom, or to compensate for so many sacrifices? Our exertions, my Lords, under the auspices of the present Ministers, are as hopeless as they are incalculable. When the accounts of the American war were made up, the whole amount of interest was under 9,300,000*l.*; the charge created at the end of last session was little less than 7,500,000*l.*; no one will contend, that what is wanted for the present year will not require 2,000,000*l.* more to pay the interest.

I know, my Lords, that the subject of finance is irksome to you; but let me entreat you to consider the magnitude of the debt, under which this country labours. The annual charge entailed upon this country, in the course of a few years war, is equal to the amount of the debt at the time when the present Ministers came into power. Without mentioning the different corps of supplementary cavalry, &c. which had been raised at a great expence to the country, the permanent debt of the nation was doubled in the short space of five years. Can you think, then, that no blame can attach to the men, who have squandered so profusely the resources of the nation without fruit or advantage? Do you think, that the review of what we were and what we are now, what we have spent and what we have gained, or rather lost, affords no proof of the incapacity of the present Ministers; and that, under their auspices, you can have any

hope that your affairs will be conducted with ability and success? While we contemplate this afflicting situation of affairs abroad, there is nothing in our internal state to afford us any consolation. While our burdens have increased, our privileges have been abridged. We are now living under laws repugnant to the best principles, which our ancestors laboured to establish. But there is another topic, which this review suggests, on which I know not how to speak. Consider, my Lords, the situation of Ireland at the present moment. It has been said, that you ought not to interfere in the affairs of Ireland: but do not the Ministers of this country interfere in the affairs of Ireland? Do not the Ministers of this country, by the system which they pursue, alienate from you the affections of the sister kingdom? My Lords, were I to enter into a detail of the horrible acts, which have been done in Ireland, the picture would appal the stoutest heart. It could be proved, that the most shocking atrocities have been perpetrated; but indeed what could be expected, if men, kept in strict discipline, were all at once allowed to give loose to their fury and their passions? To the military, then, I do not impute the blame, but to those, by whom their excesses have been permitted and encouraged. Certain it is, that two distinct and opposite orders have been issued for regulating the conduct of the military; one, by which they were allowed to act without the authority of the civil power; and the other, by which they are restrained from acting without that authority. It is known, that regiments have published declarations, in which they state, that certain persons shall find, before they are delivered into the hands of the civil power, that such a regiment is not to be trifled with. These insulting proceedings too are sanctioned by the countenance of Government. What then must be the consequences of these measures, if not checked by the introduction of a more conciliating system; and what prospect is there that conciliation will ever be employed with success by men, who have loosened, by their misconduct, the bands which unite the two kingdoms? My Lords, they must be fatal; there can be no prospect of conciliation but by a change of those men, who have sanctioned this tyranny, and under whose government we now live.

I think I have stated sufficient to justify my having asserted, that you are imperiously called upon by the duty you owe your country, to adopt the address I shall propose to you, or one of a similar tendency. I have shown you, that Ministers have exhibited no vigour in the prosecution of the war; for, with all the means of carrying it on, we are reduced to a state of defence; that, by their ill-timed

concessions, they have taught the enemy to believe they may in the end, by perseverance, gain all they wish from us ; that our internal government is weakened by their conduct, and only supported by means not fit to be resorted to in a free country ; that our resources, by their lavish profusion, are nearly exhausted ; and that they have not brought us into this situation without being aware of the probable consequences of their conduct—we have frequently warned them of their danger. I must confess I am at a loss to know what they can bring forward in support of their continuance in office. All that they can pretend to is the rectitude of their intention. To a charge of guilt, the allegation of innocence may be properly opposed ; but it does not apply to the present question. My object to-day is prudential and prospective. If their plea of innocence were ever so well founded, it would be no justification of your Lordships in trusting the government of the country to men, who in no one act have exalted the nation ; whose every act has tended to degrade and disgrace it.

Another plea, somewhat arrogantly urged, for continuing the present Ministers, is founded on a presumption without argument or proof, that *they* are the only persons qualified for office, of whose loyalty there could be no suspicion. I think they cannot mean to say, that there are not among those, whom I have now the honour of addressing, and in the other House too, a sufficient number of men to constitute a Cabinet—men capable of advising His Majesty, of great talents, fair character, and adequate property. But this charge, though not levelled against me, is directed against those with whom I am proud to be intimately connected. I will ask what there is in our conduct to justify so arrogant an assertion ? Have we shown, that we are candidates for office ? How would any of your Lordships describe such a candidate ? Would you not describe him as complying in his disposition, assiduously courting the support of every majority, acquiescing in the sentiments of any majority, bold and haughty in prosperity, and mean and conceding in adversity ? Would such a description apply to us ? Have we ever deserted any point, or abandoned any principle ? Have we not preserved a uniform line of conduct ? Does the perseverance in principles justify suspicion ? We have said, indeed, that a Reform in Parliament is necessary ; that it is what the people have a right to. We have said, that by the Constitution they have a right to a fair representation ; we wish for something to control the increasing power of the Crown ; we want a balance to the power of the Aristocracy in the creation of Peers, when Peers are made by dozens—

The Earl of FAUCONBERG spoke to order.

The Duke of BEDFORD. If any noble Lord thinks I am disorderly, he will proceed, I hope, strictly, according to the orders of the House, and move to have my words taken down. I shall always bow to the orders of the House; but I cannot consent to pay any noble Lord that deference, if he does not abide by those orders.—[After a pause.] I may presume that I was not disorderly, since my words have not been taken down. I was stating, and I conceive I had a perfect right so to do, that I wished for a Parliamentary Reform, in order to counteract the growing influence of the Crown and the Aristocracy. I think the Commons are no longer likely to hold that independence, which they have hitherto possessed. No one has a right to suppose that I mean to say any thing against the particular persons selected; many of them I know and respect; but the fairer their character, the greater is the eventual danger to the Constitution; for, if Commoners of the most considerable fortune are to be selected and removed from the House of Commons, and if no measures are taken to lessen the difficulty of supplying their places with gentlemen of independent character, I need not say that the result must be fatal to the general independence of that House. It must be so when no country gentlemen are left, who may be able to bear the expence of contested elections, or to resist the influence of Government. These expences are become so great, and the power of the Crown so extended by the increase of influence derived from the collection and expenditure of an immense increasing revenue, that there is little doubt, that in future the Minister of the day will have the nomination of most of the Members. I say therefore distinctly, that I am an advocate for Parliamentary Reform. If that be an objection against us, we wish it not to be waved; we leave it to the country to decide.

The subject has led me to the recollection of another point upon which I shall say a few words—I am aware that, when any person is stigmatized, it is competent to that person to rescue himself from such stigma; but still it is disagreeable to direct your Lordships to any individual. I entreat, therefore, your Lordships' indulgence, while I say a few words respecting myself, which I should not have done, if my conduct had not been made the subject of animadversion. When I had the honour of, a second time, proposing a day for the discussion of the question, which I am now about to submit to you, it was remarked that the manner in which I proposed it, sufficiently shewed that I thought it of no importance to the Nation and your Lordships. I was told, that the mode of introducing it

justified the rejection of the first motion, particularly when it was recollected, that I had absented myself for six weeks. On this subject I should not have said any thing, if I had not seen that the remarks then made met with the approbation of most of your Lordships who were present. I did not state that it was not a matter of much importance to the nation. I said, that if you did not think it important enough to induce you to put off the adjournment of the House, I could not think it likely to meet with much success among your Lordships. Yet I said, that I brought it forward on the ideas of many persons who conceived it might be beneficial, and I am anxious that it should be so understood. Because, though I cannot admit that absenting myself precludes me from bringing before you any subject, yet it would be highly unbecoming in me to come forward, convinced that I could do no good, and merely for the purpose of delivering a speech.

With respect to absenting myself, I should not have thought that it could have been of consequence enough to have been mentioned within these walls. I stated my determination to do so last year, and my reasons. I said that, finding I could do no good, I thought it absurd to trouble your Lordships; but, if ever I should think I could be of service, I would come forward. I did so upon the subject of the Assessed Taxes—I resisted that tax, because I thought it most unequal and most unfair; highly oppressive on the middling classes, and favouring the rich. I came forward again, because I imagined that your Lordships, in such a state of affairs, might think that the Administration of the country ought no longer to be trusted to such hands—I then meant to retire, as I now do, convinced, that by remaining I can do no good; ready, however, to return whenever I can hope to be of any service.

After the severe punishment, which has to-night been inflicted on the proprietor and printer of a newspaper, it may not be unfair to complain of the foul calumnies which are heaped by the underlings, or, I know not what to call them, of Government, on every man who opposes the measures of Administration. The basest aspersions and the most scandalous insinuations are lavished on all, who have too much spirit to submit to the acts and opinions of the present Ministry. From the quantity and the quality of this abuse, one would think that they, who were engaged in it, were conscious that the honest exercise of their talents would not entitle them to the pay, which they received from their employers, and that, in order to earn it fairly, they must extend their calumnies by courting and gratifying the malignity of the Public. We have been charged with

attempting to inflame the people by our speeches ; we have been charged with wishing to succeed the present Ministers, and with hostility to the Constitution. These things have produced some effect. The people have been taught to believe that, which our accusers themselves know to be false. It may be said that we ought not to regard these calumnies, and ought to persevere in doing our duty. It becomes a question, however, what is our duty. Such despicable calumnies certainly ought to be treated with contempt. But if, instead of counteracting the encroachments of Ministers, our attendance has no other effect but to sanction their abuses, and teach the people to believe that they have no alternative but to chuse between the present Ministers and those with whom I act, I should consider that attendance as not only nugatory, but mischievous. By publicly relinquishing the competition imputed to us, we shall prove, at least, that this part of the general calumny is ill founded. By withdrawing the attention of the country from us, and fixing it upon Ministers, we are desirous that the people should reflect that no evil can be greater than the continuance of the present Ministers in office. Then they will find men able to conduct their affairs, men fitted to conciliate Ireland, to obtain peace ; men, in whom the French will have no title to think that concession is weakness. We hold a Reform in Parliament to be necessary. We know that the measure is very unfavourably received by the majority. We are convinced, however, that without it the country can never be placed upon a good footing. We stand pledged to take no share in any Administration in which this is not the leading object. In saying this, however, I am ready to confess, that there are some measures which appear to me to be more immediately urgent than Parliamentary Reform—a peace with France, the conciliation of Ireland, with the question of Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform in that country. While I admit this, however, I hold a Parliamentary Reform here to be essential to the salvation of the State. With these sentiments I declare that I shall never make one of any Administration, with which Parliamentary Reform is not a leading object, and that, if the measure failed, I would not continue in office. This I say merely in answer to the charge of being a candidate for office ; for I should be ashamed to talk of myself, as fit for any office, in any other view. On this subject I likewise declare, that the specific plan, proposed last year in another place, has my concurrence. I will say farther, that without a peace with France, without conciliation with Ireland, Parliamentary Reform could be of no advantage to the country ; while the latter is neces-

sary to secure and to improve the benefits of the former. There may be men of talents and integrity perfectly well qualified for the first offices of the State, who would not consider Parliamentary Reform as a necessary ingredient in their system. Such men I should congratulate on their boldness in undertaking the conduct of public affairs on such terms. So long, however, as they acted for the public advantage, they should have my support, though I should reserve to myself the right of bringing forward the question of Parliamentary Reform whenever the proper moment arrived. These calumniators, not content with the charges I have already alluded to, have also dared to insinuate that I am not averse to the success of the French in their designs against this country. Much as I despise the authors of these attacks, I think it necessary to repel a calumny so flagitious to me, and so dangerous in another view. I cannot help considering it as a disadvantage to this country to hold out to the enemy that, on landing here, they would find supporters. Yet such are the falsehoods, which these calumniators assert; such are the means, by which they encourage the French to make the attempt. After they have, by their own falsehoods, induced the enemy to judge unfavourably of the temper of many people here, they turn round and impute the blame of encouragement of those, against whom they forged the original calumny, and ascribe to us those impressions of the enemy, which they have occasioned. But, in case of invasion, who would be the men, from whom the Directory might flatter themselves with assistance? Would it not be from those mean sycophants of power, who follow every change, who have alternately been the creatures of every one in authority, and whose loyalty

“ Is the blind instinct that crouches to the rod,
 “ And licks the foot that treads it in the dust ? ”

Every man in the country must know that, if the French were to succeed, we should be the most degraded and absolute slaves that ever existed. No rational man can believe that they, who oppose Administration, could for a moment abet the designs of an invading enemy: that they, who have constantly contended for the liberties of their countrymen, would join an enemy, whose avowed object is to destroy them. What then can we think of Ministers, when we see them encouraging these base calumnies? What shall we think, when we see them holding out a noble person, whom no man ever did or ever could suspect of disloyalty to his Sovereign, or treachery to his country, as unfit to be trusted with arms for their defence?

Of this subject, however, it would be irregular to say more on the present occasion, as it would more naturally form a separate consideration. Yet such calumnies as this did the creatures of Ministers industriously propagate. I mention them only to show, that no man can take any share in opposition to the measures of Administration, without being in this manner stigmatised. No man can place his honour in their hands, without being certain that, if he ventures to oppose their measures, they will use their best endeavours to destroy it.

My Lords, determined, as I am, never by any act of mine to contribute to the continuance of the present war; still, if we are attacked by the enemy, I will be among the foremost to maintain the liberties of my country against all oppressors, tyrants, and invaders. If the French should appear upon the coast in force, I shall be proud and eager to receive the commands of His Majesty, regardless of situation, and only anxious to be placed where the contest is the hottest. I never will fight for the present Ministers, for I know of no more decided enemies to their Country and their King, than they are. I may, for the moment, suspend my opposition to them, but it will only be for a moment. When I return, I return as decided a foe to them as ever. I abhor their conduct, I detest their principles, and against the system, upon which they have acted, I vow eternal enmity. If ever an unmanly timidity should make me enter into an alliance with them, if ever base fear should induce me to join with them in oppressing my country, may the just indignation of the people pursue me, may the detestation of the world be my lot, and may the Great Creator pour down his heaviest curses upon my apostate head!

I now beg leave to move your Lordships, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, most humbly to represent, that, from the commencement of the war to the present moment, His Majesty's Ministers have had all the advantages, which could be derived from the entire confidence and support of Parliament; that this confidence and support have given them the unlimited command and disposal of the power and revenue of these kingdoms; that with means profusely furnished to obtain success, the councils, which have had the direction of this power and the application of these resources, have been attended with no effect but to exalt France to her present formidable greatness, and in the same proportion to impair the relative situation of Great Britain, to expose her, with reduced strength and diminished resources, to all those dangers, which it was alledged could be averted only by an early and successful combination to resist the principles, as well as the power, of the

French Government; and, after an unavailing expence of blood and treasure, to compel His Majesty's Ministers to open a negotiation for peace by a total dereliction of all the principles, on which the war was said to be unavoidable, and by submitting to abandon those safeguards and defences, which, in the early period of hostilities, were insisted on as absolutely indispensable to the security of these kingdoms.

“ That, without looking back to the causes of the war, or inquiring whether it might, or might not have been avoided, and reserving for another moment all consideration of the charges, which may hereafter be brought against those persons, who originally advised His Majesty not to acknowledge the Republic of France, or to listen to any terms of accommodation, we think it our duty humbly to lay before His Majesty the situation, in which we are now placed.

“ We are awed by the result of the war itself, and astonished at the conclusion drawn from it by His Majesty's Ministers, who with all the means of vigorous attack, have reduced us to a state of precarious defence, yet still have the confidence to assert, that in the same councils, which have proved so incompetent in prosperity to direct with advantage the affairs of the nation, the best means are to be found of relief and security in our present difficulty and distress, and that we are still to look to *them* alone for the attainment of a safe and honourable peace.

“ That this House, and every member of it, is ready to provide for a vigorous defence of the country, and will not shrink from any personal difficulty or danger, that may attend the performance of this duty; that, whatever differences may exist with regard to the principles and policy of our internal Government, we are determined and unanimous in our resolution to resist all foreign interference. But instructed as we are by a long series of events, and corrected by experience, we are bound by our duty, and compelled by necessity, to submit to His Majesty our humble opinion, that the situation of the country is too critical, and the dangers that surround it are too serious, to admit of any farther trial of the same councils, which have constantly failed, or of the same persons for whose continuance in office, notwithstanding the heavy and unanswered charges which have been brought against them, even themselves have nothing to plead but a feeble unavailing rectitude of intention constantly overpowered by the superior policy and vigour of the enemy, or a pretended apprehension, equally false and malignant, of the designs and principles of those, whom His Majesty might appoint to

succeed them in the administration of public affairs ; as if in the present Cabinet were to be found the only efficient persons, whose loyalty and attachment to the Constitution were free from all suspicion.

That lamenting, as we do, the failure of the late negotiations for peace, we beseech His Majesty seriously to reflect, whether, when conducted by his present Ministers, there could be any reasonable hope of success. We have not forgotten their haughty and supercilious rejection of all offers of accommodation previous to the commencement of hostilities, and we too well remember the terms of inveterate and irreconcilable enmity, on which the contest was placed at the outset, and on which it has ever since been conducted, to hope for any conciliatory disposition between the enemy and the original advisers of the war. We cannot be surprised that any overture, which may now be made by His Majesty's Ministers, after having wilfully neglected or insolently refused every favourable opportunity of negotiation, should be received as an acknowledgement of weakness and distress rather than as a proof of a sincere disposition to peace.

" Farther, to represent to His Majesty, that the situation of the country is in all respects pregnant with dangers, unknown at any former period ; our domestic distress is great, and is hourly increasing ; the principles of our free Constitution have been violated, and some of the most essential securities of our liberties destroyed ; the connection with our sister kingdom is threatened with dissolution, and all the foundations of our importance and power in Europe are rendered precarious and uncertain. To extricate us from such difficulties requires much fortitude and wisdom ; for these qualities we cannot look to His Majesty's present advisers ; under *them* we cannot hope for a successful prosecution of the war, still less for the conclusion of a secure and equitable peace.

" We, therefore, submit this our humble representation to His Majesty, trusting that His Majesty will see, as we do, the urgent and indispensable necessity of employing other persons, and of adopting other councils."

In reply to Lord GRENVILLE, and other Lords, the Duke of BEDFORD said—

My Lords, fatigued and exhausted as I am, I must content myself with shortly taking notice of the general conduct of those, who

have spoken against the motion I have submitted to you. I wish it were in my power to enter into it more fully ; for I should have liked to have exposed the miserable shifts, which Ministers are reduced to, in the hope of averting the just resentment of an injured people for a few months longer. The time cannot be very distant, when they must feel the effects of it. My Lords, the noble Secretary of State, instead of answering arguments, is obliged to resort, as usual, to personalities. Instead of proving his merit or his innocence, he endeavours to identify himself with the two Houses of Parliament, to unite the country in his cause, and to involve it in his fate. He has had recourse to his natural talent for misrepresentation. I trust, however, the facts and arguments, which I have submitted to your consideration, will remain in your memory as they were stated by myself, and not as they have been represented by the Secretary of State. I must confess that, if I had wanted any additional reason for absenting myself, what has happened this night would have furnished me with it. For as long as I remain here, I perceive, I shall enable Ministers to elude the discussion of public measures, by diverting your attention towards my conduct, and to that of the persons, with whom I have the happiness to act. My Lords, the question now before you relates to the conduct of Ministers. The subject, that ought to employ your thoughts, is the state of the country ; and to the consideration of these subjects I shall leave you. I should be sorry to amuse or delude the people by useless debates in this House. If they will steadily fix their eyes on the measures of Ministers, without regard to aspersions thrown on this or that individual, I believe they will see the necessity of resorting to other councils. My Lords, in the course of the debate, many calumnious insinuations have been thrown out. That the Secretary of State should thus attack me does not surprise me ; for I am accustomed to it : but that other Lords, whose character for honour and independence I have no right to question, should bring forward such accusations, that they should charge me with that, which in their hearts they cannot believe to be true ; I must confess astonishes me. My Lords, among other charges it has been said, that I have, in bringing forward the subject of Parliamentary Reform, resorted to intrigue and management, and that I have formed a mysterious and ænigmatical connection with the Corresponding Society—a society who, we are told, are friends to the French, and traitors to their country. I know not, my Lords, whether you approve or whether you will censure me, whether it will create surprize, or whether you will think it the most natural

course for me to pursue ; but to such charges I shall make no answer. There are many, my Lords, who in their earliest infancy imbibe true principles of honour ; as they grow up it is instilled into their minds, and in their riper years, it is brought to maturity. They, I am sure, would deem it inconsistent with that honour to resort to intrigue and management in any case. To form a mysterious and ænigmatical connection with any set of men, they would hold to be disgraceful. I entertain no fear of *their* suspicions. For it is the peculiar characteristic of true honour, never to suspect without foundation. There are others, who may think themselves justified in resorting to such practices. By *them* I may indeed be suspected ; for they will ever judge of others by themselves. To the opinions of such persons I feel perfectly indifferent. I feel perfectly indifferent, because I am full of confidence, that from *their* insinuations I shall not suffer in the estimation of any man, whose good opinion I should be anxious to preserve.

THE END OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

